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MILTON

Paradise Lost
Book I

B. B. Jain

Narain's University Series of English Literature, No. 2

MILTON

PARADISE LOST

BOOK I

Edited with
*A General & Special Introduction, Text with Paraphrase,
Notes and Explanations, Questions & Answers, Etc.*

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Acc. No. 7625 (D)
Dated 4/11/2015

LAKSHMI NARAIN AGARWAL
Educational Publishers | AGRA-3

Published by :
Lakshmi Narain Agarwal
Hospital Road, AGRA-3

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Price : Rs. 18·00 only

Printed by :
Printsman, Agra-3

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GENERAL INTRODUCTION

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1. THE AGE OF MILTON

A Complex Age

The age of Milton is a very complex and decisive age in the history of England. It was an age of remarkable paradoxes and contradictions. Hilaire Belloc explains the complex and decisive character of this age in these words :

"These years were critical in the history of England. They form the decisive phase in that complete transformation which turned the English from Catholic to Protestant ; from common obedience under a king to subjection by ranks under a gentry ; from a nation of owners to a nation of wage-earners and therefore from a peasantry to a capitalist society. In those years first vigorously appear above ground the English colonies. English banking, the expansion of London and the springs of what was to become so mighty an increase in English numbers and power—modern England. Of such a development Milton was in part a prophet, in part a pioneer, in some degree a creator ; whence his profound historical significance, and the importance, for the understanding of the England coming after him, that we should understand himself."

Age of Transition

The age of Milton was in more than one sense an age of transition. The age, like the Roman god Janus, had two faces—the one looking backwards to the Middle Ages and the other forwards to the modern age. England was steadily transforming itself from the medieval ideals to the modern ideals. In the economic field, rural economy was gradually turning into urban economy. In politics, democratic ideals of human liberty and equality were gradually replacing the age-old doctrine of the divinity of the king. In religion, too, Roman Catholicism was gradually yielding to Protestantism and Puritanism. The English sovereign was receding into the background and the Parliament was coming into prominence by remarkably quick strides. Marjorie Cox says : "It is in politics rather than in the social and economic spheres that the period has a distinctive character. Its climax was in civil war and an interregnum, followed by the restoration of a monarchy fundamentally modified, though superficially the same." Nothing is more difficult to accomplish than a change in habits of thinking, for its penetration through the layers of society and of individual consciousness can only be gradual, a matter of generations. England in Milton's age was labouring through such a situation of transition in all national and social spheres.

Urbanization of England

Economic prosperity in England continued to grow steadily from the Elizabethan Age to the Age of Milton. One important change that was gradually coming on was the gradual process of urbanization. "Despite its urban aspects," says Marjorie Cox, "English society was rooted in the land. The rhythms of society corresponded with those of agriculture, the long vacations of universities and law courts coinciding with harvest time In such a society the locality had a reality and attraction for its inhabitants, and the term 'my country' during the century commonly meant 'my county'. The county was the significant unit, socially and politically as well as administratively." Although many of the nobility and gentry were acquiring town houses, the centre of life and work remained for most of them the country-house with its park and estates. The government insisted strongly on the duties of a landowner to his neighbourhood : not only did he maintain order and provide employment, but his household was often a social and educational centre. Noble men and gentry had in their households chaplains, tutors, pensioners, 'gentlemen' and boys from neighbouring families sent to them for training. The process of urbanization brought unprecedented prominence to London. London became the pivot of all social, political, cultural and commercial activities of the country. No other English town approached its population of 3,00,000. To meet the increased demands for houses, mainly by nobility, gentry, courtiers, and professional men, London expanded at a great speed. By the seventies of the century London had 'grown to be one-tenth of the whole kingdom.' With a volume of trade three times that of all the other parts taken together, it became a humming emporium for commercial as well as cultural activities. It became the haunt of foreign visitors, continental influences and cosmopolitan customs and manners. Milton was to the backbone a man of this London.

The Political Scene

The most revolutionary change that came over the national life in England in the seventh century was in the political field. The age-old political convictions and conventions crumbled down in the seventh century and new democratic ideals grew up in their stead. The theory of the Divine Right of Kings began to be openly challenged. The King (Charles I) and the Parliament came into headlong collision. The mounting opposition to the government in Church and State found vent in the Long Parliament of 1640. It was, however, impossible to establish the mutual trust between the King and the Houses of Parliament. The revolt against the King touched its point of culmination when Charles I was deposed and then put to death by the Parliamentarians under the leadership of Cromwell. Milton represented the indomitable intellectual force of the Civil War of England. He strongly defended the execution of the King in his famous *Defence of the English People*. In this defence he sought to show that it was "lawful, and hath been held so throughout all ages to call to account a Tyrant, wicked King, and after due conviction to depose and put him to death." From 1649 to 1660 England had the democratic government or Protectorate under Cromwell. Milton held the post of the Latin Secretary in the government of Cromwell. Referring to this political situation in England, G.M. Trevelyan says, "The political and religious tyranny of the monarch had been effectively curbed. The State Church no longer pretended to be co-extensive with the nation. The individual was protected in freedom of speech and person by Parliament victorious over the Crown and by the common lawyers victorious over the Prerogative Courts. Henceforth, so far as the government was concerned, a man may speak his mind as nowhere else in Europe and as never before in England. It may fairly be doubted whether any set of men, since the victors of Marathan and Salamis, had done as much to establish human freedom on a practical basis as the Roundheads and Cavaliers, the Whigs and Tories of the Stuart Parliaments."

In 1660, however, the gear of the English politics was put to the reverse order. Gradually, after the execution of Charles I and the flight of Charles II to France, public sympathies had started gathering in favour of the British sovereign. In 1660 Charles II was recalled from France and restored to the throne of England. With the restoration of the King, the Parliamentarians, specially the Puritans, who were largely responsible for the Civil War and the death of Charles I, came to be arrested and prosecuted in large numbers. Milton himself was arrested and heavily fined. Charles II's Act of Amnesty and Oblivion, however, pardoned all the rebels except those who were directly responsible for the murder of Charles I. Milton was saved under this Act. Milton lived, acted and wrote through these unprecedented reverses in British politics. This accounts for the well-pronounced political allegories in the *Paradise Lost* and *Samson Agonistes*.

Religious Scene

Religion and politics were inseparately blended together in England in those momentous years. The revolt against the sovereign also meant a revolt against the official Anglican Church and the Anglican Archbishop, Laud. Similarly, the victory of the Parliament meant the ascendancy of Protestantism. The official Anglican Church fell and rose with the rise and fall of the British sovereignty. Discussing the role of religion in the early seventeenth century, Marjorie Cox says : "Religion dominated both national and personal life in the early seventeenth century ; in both it was a matter of life and death. 'Whosoever bringeth an innovation in religion is a capital enemy of the Commonwealth', the House of Commons resolved in 1679 ; among individuals many, like Baxter, were 'serious and solicitous about my Soul's everlasting state.' An intense interest in theological controversy, and to some extent in books of devotion, was common to almost all ranks of society. Probably nearly half of the books published between 1600 and 1640 were on religious topics.

Their readers ranged from the nobility, through the gentry to the yeomen, the citizens and the apprentices. In such a society, virtually without newspapers, the pulpit played an outstanding part. To all the pulpit had a political as well as a religious significance ; it was a way of reaching the vast bulk of the population, church-going was legally enforceable, but equally sermons were a genuine popular interest." Broadly, the forties saw the destruction of the traditional framework of authority in Church and State. In the Church, the abolition of the High Commission removed the strongest disciplinary sanction. Laud was executed in 1645, and about a third of the parish clergy were ejected from their livings. The Puritans gave Utopian visions of reforms and rebuilding of society. Hopes ran high of making this "a truly happy and wholly free nation." Religious inspiration lay behind this reforming idealism, and an extraordinary number of men were gripped by the conviction of the imminence of Christ's kingdom. Cromwell opened the "Parliament of Saints" in 1653 with the words, "Why should we be afraid to say or think that this may be the door to usher in the things that God hath promised and prophesied of ?" Such vivid consciousness of the scriptures was common ; the Puritan domination of the pulpit for the past half-century had encouraged the popular study of the Bible, and the fruits of that impulse appeared as the traditional controls and inhibitions were loosened. This made for liberty of conscience and toleration. The doctrine of the 'inner light' and the reaction against predestination encouraged a shift from dogmatic religion towards a more rational theology and a more humanitarian religion.

Social Reforms

The zeal for radical reform which had its roots in religion was soon applied to secular concerns, and many aspects of society came under debate. The champions of democracy demanded manhood suffrage, a fairer distribution of Parliamentarian seats, and the protection of the people's rights by a fundamental law binding their representatives. They also demanded agrarian reforms : first common lands and then private estates were to become common property, but not by violence. Some of the reforms demanded were curiously modern, such as women's suffrage and free medical aid for the poor. There was a strong movement for simplifying the complexities of the law. Radical changes in the system of education were also suggested. Eminent continental reforms in education were invited to advise on educational reform. A large number of pamphlets on education, including Milton's *Tractate on Education,* were printed. The Parliament made provision in Wales for state-aided education. In the sphere of women's freedom civic rights and equality, however, practically no reforms were introduced. Women of the upper and middle-classes had to look upon their husbands as lords to whom an unquestioning obedience was due. This explains Milton's attitude to his first wife and his view of womanhood in general.

The Literary Scene

Equally animated was the literary scene in England during those stormy years. London became the centre of all literary and cultural activities. The habit of reading was widespread all over the country. Romances, histories, sermons, handbooks on manners and on business and roadside ballads fed the popular taste. There was a considerable increase in the number of books printed annually. The fateful years of the Civil War saw a flood of pamphlets and tracts coming on the controversial religious and political issues of the day. Some of the most talented authors, including Milton himself, were drawn to play their role in the war of pamphlets. The emphasis in literature shifted from poetry to prose tracts. The output of serious prose was rich both in variety and power. It was marked by passion, imagination and sustained power of reasoning. In the field of poetry, the majority of the poets wrote short lyrical poems which were either amatory, marked with exquisite delicacy and fanciful passion, like the lyrics of of Ben-Jonson, or religious and metaphysical like those of Donne and his followers. Milton stood head and shoulders above all authors both in poetry and prose. Milton's *Paradise Lost*, *Paradise Regained*, *Comus*, *Samson Agonistes* constitute the richest legacy the seventeenth century has left not only for England but for the whole world.

2. MILTON'S LIFE

Birth and Parentage

John Milton was born on December 9, 1608, in Bread Street, London. His grandfather, Richard Milton, was an ardent Roman Catholic, and, as such had disinherited his son, the poet's father, for his turning Protestant. The poet's father, whose name also was John Milton, therefore, settled down in London and gradually established himself as a prosperous scrivener, law stationer and money-lender. He was a man of learning and ability and had a great love for music. Not much is known of the poet's mother but it is said that "she was a woman of refinement and social grace, with a deep interest in religion and local charities." Milton, the poet, was greatly influenced by both of his parents. The poet's father came early to realize that his son, talented, studious and scholastic as he showed himself to be from an early age, was born to accomplish great things. The poet himself wrote of his boyhood in the *Second Defence of the English People* : "My father destined me from my infancy to the study of polite literature, which I embraced with such avidity, that from the age of twelve, I hardly ever retired from my books before midnight. This proved the first source of injury to my eyes, whose natural weakness was attended with frequent pains in the head ; but all these disadvantages could not repress my ardour for learning, my father took care to have me instructed by various preceptors, both at home and at school."

At St. Paul's

About the year 1620 Milton was sent to St. Paul's School for the first phase of his education. Here he studied not merely Greek and Latin, but also Italian, French and Hebrew. His head master, Alexander Gill, was an eminent scholar of ancient and modern literature. It was he who instilled in Milton a special fondness for Spenser. One of Milton's school-fellows there was Charles Diodati, son of an Italian physician who had settled in London, with whom he formed a lifelong friendship. It was during these school-days that Milton wrote the paraphrase of Psalm 136 which is used in English hymn-books to the present day. This was the first testimony of Milton's literary talents.

At Cambridge

On February 12, 1625, just six weeks before Charles I's accession, Milton entered Christ's College, Cambridge, as a "lesser pensioner". Milton was at this time a pleasing young lad of seventeen. He was a youth of middle stature 'with auburn hair and an oval face, with grey eyes, and an exceedingly fair complexion that earned him the nickname of 'The Lady of Christ's'. Milton himself later admitted that he was so nicknamed because he wouldn't "drink tankards of ale or snore at mid-day" like his school-fellows. He studied at Cambridge for seven years, taking his B. A. degree in 1628-29 and M. A. degree in 1632. He was by far too learned for most of his contemporaries, the majority of whom were destined for the Church as an easy, gentlemanly living rather than from a sense of responsible vocation or duty. Milton's father had also sent him to Cambridge with the intention that he should eventually qualify himself for the Church and take Orders. But before he left Cambridge, he was so much disgusted by the corruption among clergymen and the repressive policy of the Anglican Archbishop, Laud, that he determined not to accept Holy Orders. Being a staunch Puritan and a firm believer in independence of mind and religious belief, he abandoned for ever the idea of joining the service of the Church. "To the service of the Church," he wrote afterwards, "by the intention of my parents and friends, I was destined of a child, and by my own resolution; till coming to some maturity of years and receiving what tyranny had invaded the Church that he who would take Orders must subscribe slave, I thought it better to prefer a blameless silence before a life bought and begun with servitude and forswearing."

It was during these Cambridge years that Milton made his first experiments in poetry both in Latin and English. He showed remarkable skill in the Latin language and started writing Latin verse. It was subsequently observed by competent authorities that he was one of the first Englishmen who after the Renaissance wrote Latin verse with classic elegance. The English poems written during this period bear more relevance to the student of English literature. The first really great poem that he wrote during this period is the *Ode On the Morning of Christ's Nativity*. This was written in 1629 when Milton was only 21 years of age. This ode, in spite of minor faults natural in a young writer, is astonishingly mature, a beautiful and original piece of devotional writing, already displaying some of the characteristic Miltonic qualities. Some of the other important pieces

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belonging to this period are : *On Shakespeare* (1630), *At a Solemn Music* (1630) and *On Being Arrived at the Age of Twenty-three* (1631). They are of unequal excellence but they bespeak the advent of a great poet.

At Horton

Having completed his studies at Cambridge and having abandoned for ever the idea of entering the Church, Milton devoted himself heart and soul to the acquisition of knowledge in languages, literatures and scriptures both modern and ancient. In 1632 his father retired from business, bought a house at Horton and settled there for the rest of his life. Thither, to his father's estate, Milton retired to devote himself to reading and meditation. In the words of Mark Pattison, "......no lawyer, physician, statesman ever laboured to fit himself for his profession harder than Milton strove to qualify himself for his vocation of the poet." He was fully conscious of the arduous path that led to "Honour's seat", but at the same time he was equally confident of his innate powers and talents. He was inspired by that "inward prompting which grew daily upon me that by labour and study which I take to be my portion in this life, joined by the strong propensity of nature, I might leave something so written to aftertime, as they should not willingly let it die."

During these years of his stay at Horton, Milton produced, one after the other a number of short and long poems that brought him immediate fame. Horton was set in a remarkably beautiful natural background. It was against the background of this quiet country life, with occasional visits to London in quest of books on music, that the famous twin pastoral lyrics—*L' Allegro* and *Il Penseroso* (1602)—were written. These sister-poems recapture in their rhythm and phrasing "some of the supreme felicities of Elizabethan verse, the ease and magic of words and the serenity of the heart." Dr. Johnson says of them, "Everyman that reads them, reads them with pleasure. They exhibit a quintessence of a happy English life ; and in them the poet reveals his own temperament as a typical but a richly gifted one." *Comus, a Masque*, written in 1634, was the product of Milton's love of music. Milton had inherited a delight and skill in music from his father. He was also a friend of the lutanist Henry Lawes, music tutor in the family of the Earl of Bridgewater, and it was through Lawes that *Comus* came to be written. H. S. Taylor says : "The searching treatment of its theme, the nature of chastity, is more characteristic of Milton's interests than of those generally associated with the masque form, and it is exactly because it is something more than a mere masque that the piece has survived as literature. In this work more than anywhere else, Milton strikes the note of pastoral poetry in the English, as opposed to the classical, tradition." The next important work of this period is *Lycidas*, an elegy written to commemorate his friendhip with Edward King, drowned in the Irish Sea in 1637. In this elegy Milton casually takes up to express his disgust at the corruption of the Anglican Churchmen under Laud's administration. He threatens them with a prophetic warning:

"That two-handed engine at the door
Stands ready to smite once, and smite no more."

Within the framework of this elegy, Milton also manages to express something of his own desire to be distinguished for his poetry, and the fear that he too, like his friend, might be cut off by fate before his powers could have time to develop and show themselves in a mature work.

The Continental Tour

Milton set out on the continental tour of Europe in 1638. In April of this year he reached Italy. In Italy, wherever he halted, he was most cordially and warmly received by scholars and poets of renown. He had the privilege of meeting some of the most renowned personalities of Italy of the day, including Grotius, the great pioneer of international law, and the famous scientist and astromoner Galileo in captivity at Florence. While at Naples, Milton received the news of the Civil War (1642—1646) breaking out in England between King Charles I and the Parliament. Milton had ever been a staunch democrat supporting the cause of civil liberty from the side of the Parliament. Milton could not resist this call for liberty given by his countrymen, and therefore, cutting short his continental tour, he hastened back to England. His original plan was to pass a year in Sicily and Greece. "But then when I was preparing to pass over into Sicily and Greece, the melancholy intelligence which I received of civil commotion in England made me alter my purpose, for I thought it base to be travelling for amusement while my fellow-citizens were fighting for liberty at home." So he returned to England in 1639.

Civil War and Polemical Phases

Milton returned to England with the firm resolve to throw himself into the Civil War to secure civil and religious liberty for his countrymen. "Perceiving that the true way to liberty followed on from these beginnings, I resolved, though I was then meditating certain other matters, to transfer into the struggle all my genius and all the strength of my industry." Milton fought the Civil War with the pen in his hand, vehemently justifying and defending the people's revolt against the tyranny of the government and the Anglican Church. The twenty years covering the period of the Civil War and the reign of Cromwell mark out a gap in Milton's poetic career. The poet deteriorated into pamphleteer. He wrote about twenty five pamphlets on the current social, political, religious and educational conditions and problems, championing the cause of liberty and equality. The first five pamphlets belonging to 1641-42 are against episcopacy. The first of them, *Of Reformation Touching Church Discipline*, was published in July 1641. It launched a powerful attack on the abuses of the Church. In 1643 appeared his famous tractate *On Education*. In this tractate he outlined the Renaissance ideal of education, which aimed at fitting "a man to perform justly, skilfully and magnanimously, the duties, private and public, of peace and war." In the same year appeared *Areopagitica*, "A Speech of Mr. John Milton for the liberty of unlicensed Printing, to the Parliament of England, which has become accepted as the world's classic on the freedom of the press." In 1649, when Charles I was taken a captive on trial, and the Parliamentarians were in full cry for his deposition and death, Milton wrote a number of small treatises to reconcile the public mind to his execution. "More ferocious, more coarse, more personal than any of his fellows and opponents," says Stopford Brooke, "Milton did his pamphleteering for the Council as no other man in England could have done it." In 1649 appeared his first important political tract, *Tenure of Kings and Magistrates*, in which he supported the deposed king. The same year he was made Secretary for Foreign Tongues to the new Council of State under Cromwell. In 1651 appeared his *Defence of the English People* and in 1654 *Second Defence of the English People.* At the time when Milton was writing his first *Defence of the English People*, the sight of his first eye had entirely gone. His physicians warned him not to strain his eyes any more if he wanted to retain his partial vision. But Milton refused to put off his duties to the country in spite of the physicians' warnings. "The choice lay before me between dereliction of a supreme duty and loss of eyesight ; in such a case I could not listen to a physician ; I could not but obey that inward monitor, I know not what, that spoke to me from heaven. I, therefore, concluded to employ the little remaining eyesight I was to enjoy, in doing this, the greatest service to the Commonwealth it was in my power to render." After the execution of Charles I in January 1649, Milton wrote a pamphlet seeking to show that it was "lawful, and hath been held so throughout all Ages......to call to account a Tyrant, wicked King, and after due conviction to depose and put him to death." Milton continued to write in defence of Republicanism, now in a tone of despair against the growing monarchal trend, lest the people should throw away their hard won liberty and "basely and besottedly run their necks again into the yoke which they have broken." He saw too clearly that a restoration of the Stuarts would herald a gradual return to tyranny, and the need for renewed civil insurrection.

Let us at this stage revert to an important phase of Milton's life that we have skipped, *viz.*, his marriages and the writing of divorce tracts. Referring to his first marriage, Edward Philip (Milton's nephew) says : "About Whitsuntide it was, or a little after, that he took a journey into the country ; nobody about him certainly knowing the reason or that it was any more than a journey of recreation : after a month's stay, home he returns a married man, that went out a bachelor ; his wife being Mary, the eldest daughter of Mr. Richard Powell, then Justice of Peace, of Forrest-hill, near Shotover in Oxfordshire." Powell was a realist, a country squire, who kept open his house to a wide circle of friends, and the young bride, who was half Milton's age, had been brought up in an atmosphere of easy living and gay company : as the eldest daughter she was probably in the habit of getting her own way. Anybody less clever than Milton might have foreseen a bad match. After enduring a "philosophical life" for a month, Mary was allowed to return to her parents for a protracted visit. Once away, she decided not to return, and repeatedly refused Milton's requests that she should. The deadlock led Milton to write a series of tracts advocating the need and desirability of divorce. These he had printed, neglecting the law which required a licence for any printed work, and impudently submitted a copy of the first pamphlet to the assembly of distinguished clergymen then in session at Westminster. The assembly felt scandalized and highly enraged. One of the divines speaking to the Parliament referred to Milton's work as "a wicked book abroad and uncensored, though deserving to be burnt, whose author hath been so impudent as to set his name to it and dedicate it to yourselves." The result of these Divorce Tracts, however, was that his wife had to come back to him. Milton not only forgave her but also gave shelter to her parents and sisters when they were in trouble during the reign of Cromwell. Mary Powell, however, died in 1652. On November 12, 1656, Milton married Katharine Woodcock. But his second wife also died in childbirth in February 1658. In February 1663, the blind poet married once again. His third wife was Elizabeth Minshull, a lady thirty years younger than himself.

The Restoration and the Poet's Epic Phase

Then came the Restoration in 1660. With this began a dismal period of danger and dishonour in the life of the poet. The Republicans were tried and prosecuted by special courts of law. Many were put to death. In the end, however, was passed the Act of Amnesty and Oblivion. Milton escaped death punishment under this Act. His intimate friends like Andrew Marvell in the House of Commons got his name included in the general oblivion. Two of his books were publicly burnt by the common hangman, but no punishment was inflicted on the poet. This put an end to the political life of Milton.

Milton now retired to his solitary abode and once again devoted himself to the service of the Muse. He now took up the *Paradise Lost*, the plan of which he had already finalized years ago. Being blind he had to dictate it orally to his nephew Philip and his other pupils or scholars who came to visit him in large numbers. The *Paradise Lost* was completed in 1663. About this time, on account of the Great Plague, Milton had to shift his residence temporarily from London to Buckinghamshire when he showed the manuscript of *Paradise Lost* to his Quaker friend, Thomas Illwood who, after reading it, observed, "Thou hast said much here of Paradise Lost, but what hast thou to say of Paradise Found ?" A year later, Milton showed Illwood *Paradise Regained*. Thus *Paradise Regained* came to be written. Finally, in 1667 came the masterpiece of classical tragedy, *Samson Agonistes*. With these epics ended the poetic career of Milton. They have won him a station among the few greatest poets of the world.

His death

Milton had long been a patient of gout. In his sixty-sixth

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year it took a serious turn and proved fatal. On the 10th of November 1674, he quietly passed away at his house at Bunhill Fields. He was buried in the chancel of St. Giles, Cripplegate, London, besides his father's tomb. His funeral was splendidly and numerously attended. No memorial was erected to his memory at the moment. An epitaph was, however, put up on his grave towards the end of the Victorian Age. A monument was also erected to his memory in Westminster Abbey. ●

3. MILTON'S SUBLIME PERSONALITY AND CHARACTER

The Poet and His Works

Milton the poet is an essential corollary of Milton the man. On every line that he has written, in prose or verse, there is the stamp of his personality. To him poetry was not an idle pastime but a literary expression of the deep and inevitable urge that he felt within himself. Prof. Raleigh says, "Milton's indomitable personality and irrepressible originality have left their stamp on all his works, and have moulded his treatment, his handling, his diction, his style. We, who have been inward for centuries to Miltonic mouthings and mannerisms, are too likely to underestimate the degree of his originality."

In the words of Coleridge, "John Milton is in every line of *Paradise Lost*." Prof. J. C. Suffolk says : "Partly from biographical material and partly from the evidence of his works, it is possible to form an impression of Milton's mind and personality. The outstanding features are his massive poetic gifts, the immensity of his learning, the sincerity of his faith as a Puritan, with which he combined a certain magnanimity and a surprising degree of tolerance, his love of mucic and a stubborn devotion to liberty as he interpreted it." His piety and pride, intense patriotism and strong love of liberty, uncompromising Puritanism and deep erudition, are everywhere discernible.

Loftiness of His Character

Milton's character and personality may be defined in one word as "lofty". A serious-minded man, he did not concern himself with trivialities. A dignified reverence and high seriousness marked all his actions and endeavours. He had the deeprooted conviction that all his actions were being constantly and carefully observed by his awful taskmaster. He drew inspiration for all his thoughts and actions from religion. It was his deep faith in religion and God's justice that prevented him from straying from his lofty idealism and path of duty. His character was so lofty, his thoughts and ideas so pure, his learning so deep and wide, and his faith so unimpeachable and deep that, like Colossus, he was head and shoulders above his contemporaries.

His Dedicated Life

Milton lived a life of dedication. He had dedicated himself to the service of man and God. He performed all his life's work with the clear consciousness of ever being in his awful Taskmaster's eye. The atmosphere of calm restraint and dignified and reverent seriousness in the family in which he was brought up and the conduct of his severe Puritan father, cast an indelible impression on his deeply sensitive mind. It was the sternness and grandeur of the Old Testament that moulded his life and character. His unshakable faith in God and Divine Justice made him strong, even stubborn. He had to suffer much in life—he lost his eyes, lost his hopes, lost his mental peace, and fell on 'evil tongues and evil days', yet the hard rock of his faith was never shaken. God cast him into the furnace, and weighed him in the balance, placed him in the whirlpool of danger to his life and honour, but he remained unshaken. "What through the field be lost ? All is not lost", was the cry of his soul. His strong egotism proceeded from the deep conviction that he was God's elect and champion and it was not in him to compromise with wickedness, hypocrisy or untruth. He declared eternal crusade against them, wherever there was corruption or tyranny—whether in the church or in politics—he would contend against them with indomitable courage and fortitude. This was the mission of his life.

A Great Democrat

Milton was a great democrat and Republican. He was the champion of the poor, weak and fallen. He was the sworn enemy of tyranny in every form and shape. He was a great advocate of human freedom and liberty. He dedicated every thing to 'liberty's defence', the noble task of his life. Mark Pattison rightly remarks that "he defended religious liberty against the prelates, civil liberty against the crown, the liberty of the press against the executive, liberty of conscience against the Presbyterians, and domestic liberty against the tyranny of Common Law." He had the first experience of tyranny, as a student at Cambridge, in the dictatorial bearing of the Anglican Archbishop Laud. He had joined the Cambridge University with the intention of accepting Holy Orders and joining the church. But the tyrannical bearing of Laud so disgusted him that he gave the idea of entering the church for ever. A staunch Puritan and a firm believer in independence of mind and religous belief, he refused to join the service of the church under Laud. "To the service of the church," he wrote afterwards, "by the intention of parents and friends, I was destined of a child, and by my own resolution, till coming to some maturity of years and perceiving what tyranny had invaded the church that he who could take Order must subscribe to be a slave, I thought it better to prefer a blameless silence before a life bought and begun with servitude and forswearing." Later he discovered in Charles I a more potent dictator, tyrant and enemy of human liberty and honour. Therefore he joined the Republicans and defended the regicides. When the Civil War started, he cut short his continental tour, even abandoned the love of poetry, and plunged himself into the flames of war. Milton wrote later, "Perceiving that the true way to liberty followed on from these beginnings, I resolved, though I was then meditating on certain other matters, to transfer into the struggle all my genius and all the strength of my industry." When Charles I, the symbol of tyranny and injustice, was executed, he vehemently defended the execution of the King in a number of books and pamphlets. In one of them he wrote that it was "lawful, and hath been held so throughout all ages, to call to account a tyrant, wicked king, and after due conviction to depose and put him to death." He thus championed the cause of human liberty, equality and individual dignity to the best of his might and to the last breath of his life.

His Learning

Milton had no equal of him in schorlaship and classical learning. He was well-versed in a number of ancient and modern languages and had read several foreign literatures and scriptures in the original. His knowledge of languages included Greek, Hebrew, French, and Italian. A careful study of *Paradise Lost* would reveal the sources from which his imagination was fed : the classics of Greece and Rome, the Bible, ancient and contemporary, history, travel, geography, scientific knowledge, politics, an interest in military matters, legend, and fable all contribute to his store of learning. He covered this wide expanse of learning by regular and persistent hard labour and industry. Even as a young student he had voraciously read and digested Homer, Virgil, Plato, Xenophon, Euripides, Ovid and many other erudite authors and scholars. In one of his Latin elegies Milton writes that even before he went to school and was only a child of eleven he "penetrated into the recesses of the Muses, saw the sacred and green places of Parnassus, and drank the Pierian Cups." He retained this curiosity and love of learning to the end of his life. In *Paradise Lost*, Book III, the old blind poet "fallen on evil days and evil tongues," when bewailing his lot, says :

> "Yet not the more
> Cease I to wander where the Muses haunt
> Clear spring, or shady grove, or sunny hill
> Smit with the love of sacred song."

Milton was given to hard and sustained studies till late hours in the night from his early boyhood days. In the pursuit of knowledge he would gladly burn midnight candles, "scorn delights and live laborious days." So in *Il Penseroso* he says:

> "Or let my lamp, at midnight hour,
> Be seen in some high lovely tower,
> Where I may oft outwatch the Bear,
> With thrice great Hermes, ar unsphere
> The spirit of Plato."

Milton's poetical works specially the *Paradise Lost*, *Comus*, *Samson Agonistes* and *Paradise Regained* are stamped with the author's unfathomable erudition and learning. One can hardly comprehend a verse-paragraph from *Paradise Lost* without consulting standard reference books on classical mythology, theology, religion and scriptures. We are simply amazed at Milton's learning when we recall that he orally dictated all his great poetical works in a state of complete blindness when he could neither read new things nor refresh what he had already read. There is scarcely a page in his writings which does not contain at least half a dozen allusions to Greek and Latin literature or scriptures. This opulent allusiveness is the chief distinction of Milton's writings. Much of the beauty and grandeur of his poems is due to these classical allusions. His similes would not have been what they are but for the facts and ideas he borrowed from the legends of ancient Greece and Rome. He richly decorated his Muse with many rare gems that he found "in the quarry of classical literature."

His Love of Beauty

Like all poets in general Milton was deeply susceptible to the influence of beauty. Like an Aeolian harp his soul always thrilled to beauty and joy. In young Milton we find the Milton of the Renaissance—the disciple of Spenser and the Elizabethans. At that time a thing of beauty was to him a joy for ever. In the sixth elegy written to his Italian friend Diodati in 1629, the young poet reproves his friend for thinking that festivity and poetry cannot go together. But love of unrestrained pleasure and frank sensuous beauty was not a part of his deeper self. Even when he is L' Allegro, he loves only those beautiful things which have in them purity and temperance. In all the poems of Milton we find his love of virtue and love of beauty. His aestheticism tempered by his puritanism, and his puritanism beautified by his aestheticism, make his poems both lovely and dignified to his readers. He was a worshipper of beauty both in its sensuous and spiritual aspects. He was a disciple of Spenser and Pluto simultaneously. The rich sensuous aspect of beauty he learnt from Spenser, and Plato taught him that virtue is the beauty of the soul. But his love of spiritual beauty never led him to forget sensuous beauty which is the soul of all poetry. He was a dreamer of the beautiful in the world of Nature and Man. Ugliness and Milton were strangers to each other. In the crucible of his fiery imagination all ugliness and dryness dissolve into pure beauty. As with one hand he holds "that golden key that opens the palace of eternity," so with the other he lays bare the 'infinite riches' of beauty before our admiring eyes. This dual nature of Milton is one of his chief distinctions as a poet.

Hilaire Belloc, commenting on Milton's love of sensuous beauty, rightly says : "Beauty was for him all his life an appetite, an object and a guide. Of all the English poets he is the one for whom sudden beauty in diction seems most inevitable, in whom you never know under what incongruous conditions beauty at white heat will not appear, shining through an immortal line. He knew that he was the vehicle, and after fashion, the priest of beauty and he worshipped at that shrine all his life—to our immense advantage." His words and phrases have a strange evocative power in them, and they conjure

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up such subtle pictures of elfin beauty that they haunt our imagination as spirits haunt the forlorn graveyard.

His Love of Music

But Milton had not only "music in himself" but music was the very stuff he was made of. Amidst all the singular trials and troubles of his life Milton was upheld by two things—love of religion and love of fine arts. Of all the arts he loved music the most. This taste for music he inherited from his father who was a great musician himself. He was brought up in a household which had a regular atmosphere of music about it. Great music dissolved his soul into ecstasies and brought all heaven before his eyes. It was in the fitness of things that the "mighty-mouthed inventor of harmonies," the "God-gifted organ-voice of England," who was destined to sing of supramundane and suprasensuous events and things should be so deeply sensitive to music. At the age of twenty-two young Milton wrote :

> "Blest pair of Sirens, pledges of Heaven's joy,
> Sphere born harmonious sisters, voice and verse,
> Wed your divine sounds, and mixed power employ,
> Dead things with inbreathed sense able to pierce."

This love of music he retained to the end of his life. Even when he was old and blind, and like a gnarled oak battered by storm and thunder, this tried servant of God did not forget his love of music. In describing the daily routine of his life of this period Bishop Newton writes : "(He) after dinner played on the organ, and either sang himself or made his wife (the third) sing who, he said, had a good voice, but no ear."

Even amidst the din and discord of the Civil War he did not forget music, his favourite and lifelong passion. In his noble but unpractical *Tractate on Education*, attacking the methods of the Universities and presenting his own scheme for a complete and generous education of boys, he says that the intervals of their more severe labour might "both with profit and delight be taken up in recreating and composing their travailed spirits with the solemn and divine harmonies of music, heard or learnt, either while the skilful organist plies in grave and fancied descant, in lofty fugues or the symphony, with artful and unimaginable touches adorn and grace the well-studied chords of some choice composer ; sometimes, the lute or soft organ-stop waiting on elegant voices, either to religious, martial, or civic ditties ; which if wise men and prophets be not extremely out, have a great power over dispositions and manners, to smooth and make them gentle."

The noble words quoted above can be written only by one who is a connoisseur of music. Throughout his poems we find such subtle and sympathetic references to music which are natural only on the part of one whose mind is deeply susceptible to its influence and inspiration. In *L' Allegro* he prays to the goddess of Mirth, saying :

"And ever, against eating cares,
Lap me in soft Lydian airs,
Married to immortal verse,
Such as the meeting soul may pierce,
In notes with many a winding bout
Of linked sweetness long drawn out
With wanton head and giddy cunning,
The melting voice through mazes running,
Untwisting all the chains that tie
The hidden soul of harmony."

In *Il Penseroso*, in a more serious mood, he expresses his heart-felt desire to sit within the "dim religious light" of a cloister's inside, and

"There let the pealing organ blow,
To the full-voiced quire below,
In service high and anthem clear,
As may with sweetness, through mine ear,
Dissolve me into ecstasies,
And bring all Heaven before mine eyes."

Even his *Comus*, the merry god of sensuality and witchcraft is deeply sensitive to the influence of music. The subtle difference between the sensuous music and spiritual music which Comus feels within himself is Milton's own analysis. Hearing the celestial strains of the Lady Comus, he says :

"Can any moral mixture of earth's mould
Breathe such divine enchanting ravishment ?
Sure something holy lodges in that breast
And with these raptures moves the vocal air
To testify his hidden residence.
How sweetly did they float upon the wings
Of silence, through the empty vaulted night,
At every fall smoothing the raven down
Of darkness till it sailed."

4. MILTON'S PRINCIPAL WORKS

Milton's literary and intellectual life falls into three pericds, each with a strongly marked character.

(1) From his birth to the conclusion of his education, from 1608 to 1638. This may be called his *Early Verse* period.

(2) His political life, from 1638 to 1660, the year of the Restoration. The period contains all his prose writings.

(3) His poetic life, from 1660 to 1674. This period contains all his greater works.

The following are the poems belonging to the First Period :

1. *On the Morning of Christ's Nativity* (1629 .
2. Two English sonnets—'O Nightingale' and 'How soon hath time' and five Italian ones (1630-31).

3. *L' Allegro* and *Il Penseroso* (1633).
4. *Arcades* (1630-34).
5. *Comus* (1634).
6. *Lycidas* (1637).

The great works of the Second Period are :—

1. The Pamphlets : *Church Discipline, Prelatical Episcopacy, Animadversions, The Reason of Church Government Urged against Prelacy* and Apology for *smeetymnuus* (1641-42).
2. The pamphlets dealing with Divorce : *Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce, The Judgment of Martin Bucer, Tetrachordon,* and *Colasterion* (1643-45).
3. *Areopagitica, Of Education* (1644).
4. *The Tenure of Kings and Magistrates, Eikonoklastes* (1649).
5. Defensio Pro Populo (1651).
6. Defensio Secunda (1654).
7. Defensio Pro Se (1655)
8. The Ready and Easy Way to Establish a Free Commonwealth (1660).
9. Sixteen English Sonnets (1642-58).

The great works of the Third Period are :

1. *Paradise Lost* (1667).
2. *Paradise Regained* (1671).
3. *Samson Agonistes* (1671).

Hallam says of the *Ode on the Nativity* that it is the finest Ode in the language ; and Landor says of the stanzas 4-7 that "it is incomparably the noblest piece of lyric poetry in any modern language that I am conversant with."

At any rate in this *Ode* we hear the early notes to Milton's stately music. The best blossoms of his Horton period are *L' Allegro, Il Penseroso, Comus* and *Lycidas*. The scenery in the first two poems is typically English, but it is idealized and blended with reminiscences of other places. They set forth two contrary ideals. *L' Allegro* begins with the dawn, prefers blameless social mirth, with rustic merry-makings thrown in, and the Shakespearean stage in the evening. *Il Penseroso* begins with twilight, followed by the late hours of a scholar. The day is spent in woodland shades ; and the stately organ music of a cathedral or a college choir is substituted for the Shakespearean stage. In the two poems, Milton is said to portray the Cavalier and Puritan ideals of life. It is easy to see in which direction Milton's own sympathies and inclination lay.

Comus is based on an incident which occurred to a daughter of the Earl of Bridgewater, then President of Wales. Its story runs as follows : A beautiful lady has been lost in a wood, and is brought under the spell of the Magician of the Senses, Comus. A spirit—who represents the free powers of the virtuous mind—appears to her brothers in the guise of a shepherd, and by the help of a root, called "haemony" frees her from his spells. But in *Comus*, though a courtly *masque*, Milton sounds a note of warning. He has in view both the sensuous rituals of the Church under Laud's direction as well as the ungoverned sensuality of Charles' court—and prophesies the overthrow of both of them.

Lycidas is a pastoral elegy on the death of a college friend, Edward King, who had been destined for church, and who was drowned in his passage from Chester to Dublin. Milton's lament for his friend is admirably set forth in the conventional phraseology of the pastoral form. The stately music of his verse, which becomes richer and fuller in *Lycidas*, gives promise of the organ of *Paradise Lost*. But two facts deserve to be noted in connection with this poem. First, he openly denounces the corruption of the church :

"The hungry sheep look up and are not fed."

Second, he says that the serious work of his manhood was to begin :

"To-morrow to fresh woods and pastures new."

Milton's prose works need not detain us long. The *Areopagitica*, not directly connected with the political issue of the time, stands by itself—the noblest plea for freedom of thought and speech that the world has ever known. It is written in remarkably eloquent and passionate prose with the majestic roll of sound. In this book, Milton urged the Parliament to repeal an ordinance, passed in June 1640, for regulation of the press by a board of official censors.

Of his political writings, two pamphlets need to be noted here. His *Eiknonoklastes* or Image-breaker published in October 1649, was an official reply to the famous *Eikon Basilike* (Royal Image). The latter was popularly believed to have been written by Charles I, and was cherished with great veneration by all Royalists. But Milton's most important political pamphlet was the *Pro Populo Anglicano Defensio* (Defence of the English People). It was issued in April, 1651, in reply to a defence of Charles I and a violent attack on the English people, which, in the previous year, had been published in Holland by the celebrated Lesden professor, Salmasius. Milton received continental recognition for his *Defence*. In fact, it paved the way for the Cromwellian regime.

Not until after the the Restoration had Milton time and leisure enough to resume his poetical career and achieve his true ambition. In 1677, *Paradise Lost* was published. The poem elicited full-throated admiration of Dryden who was the acknowledged leader of the literature of the Restoration age. Gradually, Milton's fame as a great epic poet which became steadier, obliterated the memory of his republican writings. In 1671, he published *Paradise Regained* which Milton regarded as superior in merit to its predecessor *Paradise Lost*. He wrote it, he tells us, in consequence of a suggestion of Ellwoods, made after reading the manuscript of *Paradise Lost*.

In the same year was published *Samson Agonistes*, a dramatic poem on Greek model. In this dramatic poem we have the last glimpses of the sad, lonely, blind Milton who recalls the past strife and contention with great serenity. The opening lines are the very key to Milton's loneliness and helplessness in blindness :

> "A little onward lend thy guiding hand
> To these dark steps, a little further on."

Particularly his lamentation on his blindness is very poignant :

> "O dark, dark, amid the blaze of noon,
> Irrecoverably dark, total eclipse
> Without any hope of day."

The whole poem abounds in political allusions to downtrodden state of the old stubborn Republican party now without a leader or hope :

> "Eyeless, in Gaza, at the mill with slaves."

5. MILTON AS A POET—CHIEF CHARACTERISTICS OF HIS POETRY

(1) *His Melody of Diction.*—Coleridge says of Milton that he is 'not picturesque but a musical poet.' Hallam says that 'the sense of vision delighted his imagination, but that of sound wrapped his soul in ecstasy.' Tennyson rightly calls him the 'God-gifted organ-voice of England.' We may note Milton's own view as expressed in *Il Penseroso* :

> "There let the pealing organ blow
> To the full voic'd quire below
> In service high and anthem clear
> As may with sweetness, through mine ear
> Dissolve me into ecstasies
> And bring all Heaven before mine eyes."

Music, both vocal and instrumental, was diligently practised and cultivated in the Elizabethan age. Milton was born to the tradition of Elizabethan poets and song-writers, who had the musical notes tuning in their heads when they wrote verses. Trevelyan rightly says, "In the poetry of John Milton, born five years after Elizabeth died, we read clearly how the three chief elements in the English culture of that day—music, the classics and the Bible—combined to inspire the 'God-gifted organ-voice of England."

The point is that Milton, without conscious effort, wrote in melodious lines, phrases and cadences. He had not to assemble musical sounds and study musical effects like Tennyson. With his remarkable gift of choosing and making musical phrase and cadence, he could easily untwist 'all the chains that tie the hidden soul of harmony.' This can be appreciated by reading his verse aloud.

To take an example from Book I of *Paradise Lost*, we see how well the line :

> "Can execute their aery purposes"—(line 430),

illustrates its meaning by the swift flow of its metre while he describes the air as :

> "Brushed with the hiss of rustling wings"—(line 768).

We can almost hear, as we read, the rush and sweep of the diabolic wings. So perfect, indeed, as the music of Milton's lines that they can charm us even when they are little more than a mere string of names. Note the following lines from Book I of *Paradise Lost*—

> "From Aroer to Nebo, and the wild
> Of southmost Abarim ; in Hesebon
> And Horonaim, Seon's realm, beyond
> The flowery dale of Sibma, clad with vines,
> And Eleale, to the Asphaltic pool."—(*ll.* 407-411).

The sublime association of scholarship and romance which these names carry, contribute no less to their musical effect.

(2) *His Suggestive Power.*—The most striking characteristic feature of Milton's poetry is his suggestive power. The effect of his poetry is produced, not so much by what it expresses, as by what it suggests. The opening vista of associations is the main thing in his poetry. It may be remembered that Milton was well-studied in Latin and Greek. His poetry is full of allusions to the Bible and the classics. This accounts for the suggestiveness of his poetry.

Macaulay writes, "We often hear of the magical influence of poetry. The expression in general means nothing ; but applied to the writings of Milton, it is most appropriate. His poetry acts like an incantation. Its merit lies less in its obvious meaning than its occult power. They would seem, at first sight, to be no more in his words than in other words. But they are words of enchantment. No sooner are they pronounced than the past is present and the distant near. New forms of beauty start at once into existence and all the burial-places of the memory give up their dead. Change the structure of the sentence, substitute one synonym for another, and the whole effect is destroyed. The spell loses its power."

"In support of these observations, we may remark that any passage in the poems of Milton is more generally known or more frequently repeated than those which are little more than muster-rolls of names. They are not always more appropriate or more melodious than other names. Everyone of them is the first link in a long chain of associated ideas. Like the dwelling place of our infancy revisited in manhood, like the song of our country heard in a strange land, they produce upon us an effect wholly independent of their intrinsic value. One transports us back to a remote period of history. Another places us among the noble scenes and manners of a distant region. A third evokes all the dear classical recollections of childhood, the schoolroom, the dog-eared Virgil, the holiday, and the prize. A fourth brings before us the splendid Phantoms of chivalrous romance, the trophied lists, the embroidered housings, the quaint devices, the haunted forests, the enchanted gardens, the achievements of enamoured knights, and the smiles of rescued princesses."

(3) *His Sense of Beauty.*—In a letter, dated September 23, 1637 to his friend Diodati, Milton writes, "Whatever the Deity may have bestowed upon me in other respects, he has certainly inspired me, if any ever were inspired, with a passion for the good and the beautiful. Nor did Ceres, according to the table, ever seek her daughter Proserpine with such unceasing solicitude as I have sought this idea of the beautiful in all the forms and appearances of things, for many are the shapes of things Divine. Day and night I am wont to continue the search." Keats could not have expressed his love of the beautiful in more passionate language. One of the inheritors of the Renaissance culture, Milton gives expression to his love of beauty in almost all his poems. In *L'Allegro* and *Il Penseroso* there is little that is distinctly Puritan. Note how tenderly he sketches a rural scene in *L' Allegro*—

> "The ploughman, near at hand,
> Whistles o'er the furrowed land,
> And the milk-maid singeth blithe,
> And every shepherd tells his tale
> Under the hawthorn in the dale."

Then he proceeds to describe his love of romance :

> "Towered cities please us then," etc.

The poem breathes the joyous spirit of the Renaissance, coupled with a passionate love of beauty which the Renaissance fostered. Then in *Il Penseroso*, he depicts a scholar's life :

> "Let my lamp at midnight hour
> Be seen in some high lonely tower
> Where I may outwatch the Bear,
> With thrice-great Hermes, unsphere
> The spirit of Plato"

This is again the spirit of the Renaissance. However, the tone becomes austerer in *Il Penseroso* than in *L' Allegro*. The poet is attracted by pagan learning and music of the cathedral. It is all in Elizabethan tradition in which a perception of the beauty of Greek myths and legends and a pagan note are inextricably woven. This pagan learning which Milton's spirit had imbibed could not be wholly discarded even when he begins to write more serious poems dominated by the stern Puritan spirit. Not that in *Lycidas* where his Puritanism is definitely articulate, he begins with and returns again and again to the imagery and style of a pagan poet :

> "For we were nursed upon the self-same hill,
> Fed the same flock, by fountain, shade, and rill."

His Puritanism, however aggressive it became, could not wholly kill his sense of beauty. When Milton could write in *Paradise Lost* of—

> "All that bowery loveliness,
> The brooks of Eden mazily murmuring
> And bloom profuse and cedar arches."

or of—

"The smell of grain, of *tedded* grass, or kine,
On dairy, each rural sight, each rural sound"

to which he adds the lovely picture—

"It chanced with nymph-like step fair virgin pass
What pleasing seemed for her now pleases more."

His sense of beauty could not have been lost.

(4) *His High Seriousness*—According to Matthew Arnold, 'High Seriousness' is the test of all great poetry. High seriousness marks both Milton's character and poetry. He always had a high standard of poetry in his view with which he was always comparing himself, nothing short of which could satisfy his zealous ambition. He thought of nobler forms and nobler things than those he found about him. In fact, Milton's chief talent, and indeed his distinguishing excellence lies in the sublimity of his thoughts. He lived apart in the solitude of his own thoughts, carefully excluding from his mind whatever might distract his purpose or alloy its purity or damp his zeal. "With darkness and with dangers compassed round he had the mighty models of antiquity always present to his thoughts, determined to raise a monument of equal height and glory, piling up every stone of lustre from the brook," for the delight and wonder of posterity. That monument certainly is the *Paradise Lost*, in which he "pursues things unattempted yet in prose or rhyme."

(5) *His Superb Imagination*—It is the sustained power of imagination of none but of Milton himself that could have shaped *Paradise Lost*. It is claimed for *Paradise Lost* that the theme it handles is vaster and of a more universal human interest than any handled by Milton's predecessors. In fact, it deals with the fortune of the whole human race, not of a city or of an empire. Apart from the profoundest significance of the Fall of Man, the foregoing issue of the rebellion of the angels reacts upon Milton's scheme of the universe, leading to the creation of hell as the place of punishment for all the fallen angels, and the creation of the world for the habitation of man and to represent these changes being wrought in universal space through Eternity in their true proportion and magnitude and in relation to the development of the theme is the task of a supreme imagination—an imagination that can soar above time and space, and feel at home only in infinity.

Lowell rightly says: "In reading *Paradise Lost* one has the feeling of a vastness. You float under an illimitable sky brimmed with sunshine or hung with constellations; the abysses of space are about you; you hear the cadenced surges of an unseen ocean; thunders mutter round the horizon; and if the scene changes, it is with an elemental movement like the shifting of mighty winds......He produced his effects by dilating our imagination with an impalpable hint rather than by concentrating them upon too precise particulars."

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6. SUBLIMITY IN MILTON'S POETRY

Milton is the most sublime of the English poets. Sublimity is the most characteristic quality of Milton's poetry. In theme as in design, in conception as in execution, in sentiments as in imagination, in language as in style, all his major poetry has sublimity of the highest order. In fact, many of his critics strongly assert that in sublimity of thought and expression, Milton surpasses both the ancient and the modern, the native and the foreign poets. John Dennis says : "Where he has excelled all other poets in what he has exprest, he has left ten times more to be understood than what he has exprest, which is the surest and noblest mark, the most transporting effect of sublimity." Andrew Marvel, in his poem *On Paradise Lost*, writes about Milton :

"That majesty which through thy work doth reign
Draws the devout, deterring the profane,
And things divine thou treat'st of in such state
As them preserves, and thee, inviolate.
At once delight and sorrow on us seize.
Thou sing'st with so much gravity and ease ;
And above human flight dost soar aloft
With plume so strong, so equal, and so soft,
The Bird nam'd from that Paradise you sing
So never flags, but always keeps on wing."

Dryden also considered Milton as the most sublime and majestic of all poets, So he wrote in his *Epigram on Milton* :

"Three poets, in three distant ages born,
Greece, Italy, and England did adorn.
The first in loftiness of thought surpass'd ;
The next in majesty, in both the last :
To make a third, she join'd the former two."

Sublime Theme

Milton's genius needed the most sublime theme for its adequate expression. Each of his major poems has a sublime theme. *Samson Agonistes*, *Comus*, *Paradise Regained*, and above all, *Paradise Lost* have all distinctly sublime themes. The theme of *Paradise Lost* is the most extensive, the most universal and consequently the most sublime theme ever chosen by any poet in any language. Commenting on the universality and sublimity of Milton's theme in *Paradise Lost*, Dr. Johnson observes : "He has involved in his account of the Fall of Man the events which preceded, and those that were to follow it ; he has interwoven the whole system of theology with such propriety that every part appears to be necessary." Dr. Johnson further says, "His subject is the fate of worlds, the revolutions of heaven and of earth ; rebellion against the supreme king, raised by the higher order of created beings ; the overthrow of their host, and the punishment of their crime ; the creation of a new race of reasonable creatures ; their original happiness and innocence, their forfeiture of immortality, and their restoration of hope and peace." No other poet in any language has attempted to write an epic on such a vast and grand subject—"things unattempted yet in prose or rhyme."

In this respect, Coleridge's views are also noteworthy: "Its interest was not limited to a nation or a country but the whole mankind......it represents the origin of evil, and the combat of evil and good, it contains matter of deep interest to all mankind, as forming the basis of all religion, and the true occasion of all philosophy whatever." Hence Dr. Johnson is right when he remarks that "The characteristic quality of his poem is sublimity. He sometimes descends to the elegant, but his element is the great. He can occasionally invest himself with grace; but his natural part is gigantic loftiness. He can please when pleasure is required; but it is his peculiar power to astonish." So before the greatness displayed in Milton's *Paradise Lost*, all other greatness shrinks away.

Sublimity of Thought

Milton's thoughts and sentiments are equally sublime. *Paradise Lost* is the quintessence of all philosophy, metaphysics, cosmology, religion and theology. Here is a full display of the united force of study and genius; of a great accumulation of materials, with judgment to digest, and fancy to combine them. Milton was able to select from nature, or from story, or from ancient fable, or from modern science, whatever could illustrate or adorn his thoughts. An accumulation of knowledge impregnated his mind, fermented by study, and exalted by imagination. Regarding the sublimity of Milton's thought, Addison says:

"Milton's chief talent, and indeed his distinguishing excellence, lies in the sublimity of his thoughts. There are others of the moderns who rival him in every other part of poetry; but in the greatness of his sentiments he triumphs over all the poets both modern and ancient, Homer only excepted. It is impossible for the imagination of man to distend itself with greater ideas than those which he has laid together in his first, second and sixth books. The seventh, which describes the creation of the world, is likewise wonderfully sublime, though not apt to stir up emotion in the mind of the reader, nor consequently so perfect in the epic way of writing, because it is filled with less action. Let the judicious reader compare with what Longinus observed on several passages in Homer and he will find parallels for most in the *Paradise Lost*."

Grand Style

In *Paradise Lost* Milton displayed a beautiful blending of sublime thought and sublime expression. Milton's style possesses "grandeur" and "elevation", on account of which it is rightly called the "grand style". Milton introduces this grandeur, mainly by three things: (1) The use of slightly unfamiliar words and construction, including archaisms. (2) The use of proper names, not solely nor chiefly for their sound, but because they are the names of splendid, remote, terrible, voluptuous, celebrated things. They are there to encourage a sweep of the reader's eye over the richness and variety of the word—to supply that *Largior aether* which we breathe as long as the poem lasts. (3) Continued allusion to all the sources of heightened interest in our sense experience (light, darkness, storm, flowers, love and the like), but all overtopped and managed with an air of magnanimous austerity. It is on account of these devices that the poet achieves the "unremitting manipulation" of his readers. C. S. Lewis has very aptly described the effect of Milton's grand style on the readers: "He sweeps us along as though we were attending an actual recitation and nowhere allows us to settle down and luxuriate on any line or paragraph. It is common to speak of Milton's style as organ music. It might be more helpful to regard the reader as the organ and Milton as the organist. It is on us he plays, if we let him."

Continuity is another feature of Milton's grand style. His voice seems to go on smoothly, irresistibly "upborne with indefatigable wings". He does not allow the reader to settle down at each sentence. Even the fuller pause at the end of a paragraph is like a pause of music, where the silence is part of the music. In fact there is felt a sense of continuity between one book and the next by avoiding the simple sentence but he compensates for the complexity of his syntax by the simplicity of the broad effects beneath it and the perfect rightness of their sequence. The result is that the flow of speech does not fall apart into separate lumps, and the reader feels that he is following a great unflagging voice. The following paragraph from the First Book is a fine example of continuity :

> "If thou beest he—but O how fall'n ! how chang'd
> From him who in the happy realms of Light
> Cloth'd with transcendent brightness, didst outshine
> Myriads though bright : If he whom mutual league,
> And hazard in the Glorious Enterprise,
> Joined with me once, now misery hath joined
> In equal ruin ; into what Pit thou seest
> From what height fall'n !" —(*Paradise Lost*, I. 84-91)

This is a very complicated sentence, but we read it without bothering about the syntax : we receive in the most natural order all the required impressions—the lost glories of heaven, the first plotting and planning, the hopes and risks of the actual war, and then the misery, the ruin and the pit. The complex sentence here enables us to feel the enormous onward pressure of the great stream on which we are embarked. In fact, almost every sentence in the poem illustrates the same point.

We may conclude with Matthew Arnold's view of Milton's style :

"Milton, of all our English race, is by his diction and rhythm the one artist of the highest rank in the great style whom we have ; this I take as requiring no discussion, this I take as certain. The mighty power of poetry and art is generally admitted. But where the soul of this power, of this power at its best, chiefly resides very many of us fail to see. It resides chiefly in the refining and elevation brought on us by the high and rare excellence of the great style. We may feel the effect without being able to give ourselves clear account of its cause, but the thing is so. Now, no race needs the influence mentioned, the influence of refining and elevation, more than ours; and in poetry and art our grand source for them is Milton."

"It is undoubtedly true of Milton," says Leonard Welsted, "that no man ever had a genius so happily formed for the sublime."

7. THE BLENDING OF RENAISSANCE AND REFORMATION ELEMENTS

In Milton's poetry we find a harmonious blending of the two opposite elements—the Renaissance and the Reformation. The Renaissance spirit was infused in his poetry under the Hellenic, classic or humanistic influences that caught Milton's imagination, and the Reformatory or Puritanic spirit came through his Hebraic or Biblical studies and beliefs. Milton blended these two opposite streams so harmoniously that not only do they exist together but they also prove complemetary to each other. Milton, the staunch Puritan was at heart a great humanist. He employed the art and learning of the Renaissance in the service of those religious and moral truths which were the creed of his faith and philosophy. Milton, though a Puritan thinker, was a Renaissance artist. He fused into one the Hellenic love of knowledge and beauty and the Hebraic zeal for ethics and righteousness. It is this combination which, though at times it gives rise to certain incongruities in his work, is a special and distinctive feature of his master-work, the *Paradise Lost*. In fact, it is no exaggeration to say that in Milton the Hellenic and Hebraic spirits are harmonized more completely than in any other poet in the English lauguage, so that "the greatest of England's Puritans was also the greatest of her artists."

The Reformation Elements

(1) *Reformation Zeal.*—Milton was a liberal Puritan. He believed in Puritanic austerity, simplicity and faith without being fanatic, narrow minded or intolerant of other beliefs and creeds. He was one of the great leaders of Reformation that sought to bring about radical reforms in the religious, social and political life of the people. For this purpose he wrote a number of powerful and impressive tracts and pamphlets dealing with the great national problems. He could not separate his poetry from his zeal for reformation. God had blessed him with "that one talent"—the poetical genius—with which he had vowed "to serve therewith my Maker." In 1662 he wrote:

"Poetical powers are inspired gift of God rarely bestowed ...... and are of power, beside the office of a pulpit, to imbreed and cherish in a great people the seeds of virtue and public civility, to allay the perturbation of mind and set the affections in right tune ; to celebrate in glorious and lofty hymns the throne and equipage of God's almightiness, and what he works, and what he suffers to be wrought with high providence in his church ; to sing victorious agonies of my martyrs and saints, the deeds and triumphs of just and pious nations, doing valiantly through faith against enemies of Christ, to deplore the general relapses of kingdoms and states from justice and God's true worship."

(2) *Moral Ardour*—This moral ardour is present from the very beginning in all his poetry, but in *Paradise Lost* it comes to the forefront. He writes *Paradise Lost* with an avowed aim in view that

"I may assert Eternal Providence,
And justify the ways of God to men."

It was Milton, the Puritan poet, living in a Puritan environment, who selected the Fall of Man as the theme of his great epic, because in the treatment of the Fall he meant to condemn the mental levity of Man, who is prone to forget the importance of his very actions. Adam and Eve feebly commit what they imagine is a trifling error, for which they are punished with a doom out of all proportion to their crime. So he sings :

"Of man's first disobedience, and the fruit
Of that forbidden tree whose mortal taste
Brought death into the world, and all our woe,
With loss of Eden."

Milton' treatment of the Fall yields the obvious meaning that it is the first business of man to understand the issues of life, and to be aware of the importance of every trivial act.

Milton the poet is Milton the great Puritan believer and his poetry is an offering on the altar of the Deity. He conceives of himself as a mouthpiece of "that eternal spirit who can enrich with all utterance and knowledge :

"Shine inward, and the mind through all his powers
Irradiate, there plant eyes, all mist from thence
Purge and disperse, that I may see and tell
Of things invisible to mortal sight."

His words are not his own, but divine utterance througth the medium of Urania, the heavenly Muse.

Dwelling on Milton's moral earnestness in *Paradise Lost*, Dr. Johnson says :

"Of his moral sentiments it is hardly praise to affirm that they excel those of all other poets ; for this superiority he was indebted to his acquaintance with sacred writings. The ancient epic poets, wanting the light of Revelation, were very unskilful teachers of virtue : their principal characters may be great, but they are not amiable. The reader may rise from their works with a greater degree of active or passive fortitude and some precepts of justice, and none of mercy. In Milton every line breathes sanctity of thought, and purity of manners, except when the train of the narration requires the introduction of the rebellious spirits; and even they are compelled to acknowledge their subjection to God, in such a manner as excites reverence, and confirms piety."

(3) *A Devout Christian—Paradise Lost* is, in fact, a prayer of a devout Christian. It is a long hymn in praise of God, the Father and God, the Son. It is both the essence and the expansion of the basic tenets of the Bible. It presents the eternal struggle between the powers of good and the powers of evil. Satan is the protagonist of the powers of evil, who contends against God himself. In the course of the events Milton convincingly shows the utter powerlessness, helplessness and depravity of Evil beside the almightiness, beauty and benevolence of Good. Evil never succeeds, it never does under any circumstances. Milton shows this in the defeat of Satan :

> "So stretch'd out huge in length the Arch-fiend lay,
> Chain'd on the burning lake ; nor ever thence
> Had ris'n, or heav'd his head, but that the will
> And high permission of all-ruling heaven,
> Left him at large to his own dark designs.
> That with reiterated crimes he might
> Heap on himself damnation, while he sought
> Evil to others ; and enrag'd might see
> How all his malice serv'd but to bring forth
> Infinite goodness, grace, and mercy shown
> On man by him seduc'd ; but on himself
> Treble confusion, wrath, and vengeance pour'd."

The Renaissance Element

(1) *Love of Beauty*.—This Puritanic or Reformation element is balanced with the Renaissance element throughout the *Paradise Lost*. In fact, Milton harmonizes his Puritanic zeal for Reformation with the Renaissance art and learning. As a matter of fact the Reformation was only one aspect of the Renaissance. Their cooperation had been mainly responsible for the essential greatness of Elizabethan literature in which a passionate love for beauty is combined with religious fervour and strenuous moral idealism. Milton the Puritan had come under the impact of the Renaissance. In a letter to Diodati in 1637 he wrote of himself : "Whatever the deity may have bestowed upon me in other aspects, he has certainly inspired me, if any ever were inspired with a passion for good and the beautiful. Nor did Ceres, according to the fable, even seek her daughter Prosperine with such unceasing solicitude as I have sought this idea of the beautiful in all the forms and appearances of things, for many are the shapes of things divine. Day and night I am wont to continue my search." This quest for beauty is the essential Renaissance spirit. In the plan and execution of *Paradise Lost*, Milton employed the art and learning of the Renaissance in the service of those religious and moral truths which had then become the dominant factors in his life.

(2) *Humanism.*—One of the essential characteristics of the Renaissance was Humanism. It asserted the essential dignity of man. Man was believed to be the centre of all creation and all philosophy. The goal of life could be achieved not by the study of God but by that of man. It extolled human reason as well as intuition and revealed truth as the instrument of its knowledge. It, therefore, turned to scriptures for the best record of man's nature in its relation to God or righteousness and love, and then to the classical literature, where it found a wider revelation of man as an individual and a citizen.

Milton was a humanist in both his method and aim. He shows this in *Paradise Lost* from the beginning to the end. He is convinced of God, of the existence of evil, of the inevitability of retribution, and of the hope of man for salvation in the end. These are the convictions not of Puritanism alone but of the secular humanism of the Renaissance also. The real system that Milton erects in *Paradise Lost* is not a theology but an interpretation of experience, based on the bedrock of human freedom, and formulated under the guiding influence of the Bible, the ancients and the thinkers and poets of the preceding generation. Milton affirms that the account of the battle in Heaven is merely a way of representing spiritual truth to the human understanding. And as to the actual experience of Adam and Eve, not to mention the desperate plot of evil men in Hell to overthrow the reign of righteousness and law, they are richer in human truth than anything in English imaginative literature outside Shakespeare. He has been able to give them wide and permanent significance by virtue of a lifetime spent in the study of man's nature in its relation to the moral and spiritual forces by which his destiny is shaped. In this respect *Paradise Lost* is primarily the epic of man's moral struggle, the record of his first defeat and the promise of his ultimate victory.

(3) *Individualism.* Another important aspect of the Renaissance is the stress laid upon individualism. The Renaissance man recognized the worth and liberty of the individual. According to the Renaissance philosophy, a life in which man is not responsible for his own actions is meaningless. In *Paradise Lost* Milton propounds the theory of freedom of will which is the cardinal principle of the Renaissance philosophy. He shows that God in his omniscience has foreknowledge of man's fate but he leaves his will free. No one has been pre-selected to salvation or damnation. All have the chance of salvation, but certain men have been singled out for special eminence, good or bad. The independence of the individual is shown not only in Adam, but also in Satan, whose unbending resolution is here exhibited in its most magnificent and ideal form. Self-exaltation is the motive of all Satan's conduct. Even in defeat he retains his individual worth and dignity :

> "What though the field be lost ?
> All is not lost...........the unconquerable will,
> And study of revenge, immortal hate,

And courage never to submit or yield :
And what is else not to be overcome ?
That glory never shall his wrath or might
Extort from me."

But even when exalting human reason and freedom, Milton stresses human weakness and the danger of pride, which ruin Eve and Adam as well as Satan. The fallen angels lose themselves in the mazes of philosophic debate. The whole temptation of Eve is an appeal to the desire for God-like knowledge and power. In the long astronomical discussion of the Eighth Book, and with reiterated emphasis at the end of the poem, Adam is warned to check his roving fancy and to learn that the sum of wisdom is not scientific learning but every day Christian goodness. For Milton, in spite of his emphasis on human liberty and reason, and his awareness of the current scientific doctrines, the physical and metaphysical worlds were a divine order with a divine purpose and man was made in the image of God, with a spark of divine reason and divine will.

(4) *Christian Humanism*. Milton's religious views were greatly modified by his humanism. He may be called the last great exponent of Christian humanism in its historical continuity, the tradition of classical reason and culture fused with Christian faith which had been the main line of European development after the Renaissance. The central article of Milton's ethical and religious creed was liberty achieved through religious discipline, through education in the fullest sense of the word. In *Paradise Lost*, in justifying God's ways to men, his emphasis is on human freedom of choice and responsibility. The unwary Eve falls through "pride and wandering vanities", the credulous and mistaken desire for an apparent good, which mislead her reason, and Adam, whose reason is not deceived, allows uxorious passion to sway his will and break his higher ties with God. In putting the simple Biblical story on a partly humanistic and rational basis, in making it a many-sided conflict between reason and unreason, knowledge and ignorance, temperance and excesses, hierarchic disorder, Milton was following the whole tradition of Christian humanism.

Thus Milton stood as the last of the Elizabethans. Like the great Elizabethan writers he succeeded in combining a passionate love of beauty with religious fervour and a strenuous moral idealism, and he was the last poet in England to achieve this, as after him the gulf between the two movements became too wide to be bridged over again. His *Paradise Lost*, though written with the express purpose of "justifying the ways of God to man" is the great surviving moment of the immense mass of Renaissance writing dealing with Biblical material. On account of the constant presence of the Renaissance element in Milton's poetry, he is called "the last Elizabethan" or "the poetical son of Spenser."

8. THE CONCEPT OF 'PARADISE LOST'

Background of Its Composition

As far back as 1637 Milton confided to his friend Diodati that he had fixed his mind upon writing some monumental poetical work and that he was sedulously preparing himself for its accomplishment. He wrote : "I am letting my wings grow and preparing to fly ; but my Pegasus has not yet feathers strong enough to soar aloft in the fields of air." In spite of so many distractions, the "inward promptings", of which he was well conscious, "grew daily" upon him, and he held steadily to his belief "that by labour and intense study (which I take to be my portion in life) joined with the strong propensity of nature, I might perhaps leave something so written to after-times as they should not willingly let it die." He was not yet certain whether he should write an epic or a great drama. At one time he made a list of ninetynine subjects, in which he seemed to be more interested in the legend of King Arthur. He was undecided whether he should adopt the epic form "where of the two poems of Homer, and those other two of Virgil and Tasso, are a diffuse, and the Book of Job a brief model ; or whether the rules of Aristotle herein are strictly to be kept, or nature to be followed." Or, whether he should adopt the dramatic form : "those dramatic constitutions wherein Sophocles and Euripides reign." He was also undecided "what king or knight before the conquest might be chosen in whom to lay the pattern of a Christian hero"—

"Should I recall hereafter into rhyme
The king and heroes of our native clime ?
Arthur, the chief, who even now, prepares,
In subterraneous being, future wars,
With all his martial knights to be restored
Each to his seat around the federal board ?"

After long deliberations he decided upon writing an epic. For the subject of his epic, after "long choosing and beginning late" he fixed upon *Paradise Lost*, a design so comprehensive that it could be justified only by success. The restoration had by then thrown him "upon evil tongues and evil days." He had been driven from all public stations. He had already gone blind. It was in this situation that he started his immortal epic.

Being blind he could now neither read nor write. But he had already read and digested so much of vernacular, Latin and Greek literature, theology and scriptural literature that no more study was needed. Dr. Johnson says : "He had done what he knew to be necessarily previous to poetical excellence ; he had made himself acquainted with seemly arts and affairs, his comprehension was extended by various knowledge, and his memory stored with intellectual treasures. He was skilful in many languages, and had by reading and composition attained the full mastery of his own. He would have wanted little help from books, had he retained the power of perusing them." He composed the verses in his mind and retained them in his memory until he dictated them to anyone that was available at hand. The verses were taken down largely by his nephew Philips, frequently by one or the other of his daughters and occasionally by his friends and visitors. By 1665 the manuscript of the *Paradise Lost* was complete. In 1667 he was granted the licence for its publication. He sold the manuscript on April 27, 1667, to Samuel Simmons, "for an immediate payment of five pounds, with a stipulation to receive five pounds more when thirteen hundred copies should be sold of the first edition : and again, five pounds after the sale of the same number of the second edition ; and another five pounds after the same sale of the third."

Its Theme

The theme of *Paradise Lost* is the widest that has ever been attempted by man in prose or rhyme. The theme of his immortal epic is the Fall of Man from Paradise on account of his sin. Adam and Eve, our first progenitors, lived a blessed life in the garden of Eden in Heaven. They were given full freedom to enjoy everything that was there in Eden, except that of tasting "the fruit of the tree of knowledge." But led partly by curiosity and partly by the promptings of Satan in the form of a serpent, Eve plucked a fruit from the Tree of Knowledge and ate it. She also prevailed upon Adam to do the same. This was the first act of sin, a transgression of God's command. As a punishment for this sin Adam and Eve were expelled from Paradise and their progeny—mankind—was subjected to death. This is the basic theme of *Paradise Lost* which Milton himself explains in the opening lines of the First Book :

> "Of Man's first disobedience, and the fruit
> Of that forbidden tree whose mortal taste
> Brought death in the World, and all our woe,
> With loss of Eden, till one greater Man
> Restore us, and regain the blissful seat."

This central theme naturally involves the story of Satan's rebellion against God, the defeat of Satan and his numberless compeers, their expulsion from Heaven, the creation of Hell, the creation of Man's Universe, the incarnation of God's Son, Christ, on earth for man's redemption from Sin and his restoration to God's mercy. This is the theme of universal interest. This concerns every man of every creed, country or clime. Explaining the universal character of Milton's theme, Dr. Johnson says :

"The subject of an epic poem is naturally an event of great importance. That of Milton is not the destruction of a city, the conduct of a colony, or the foundation of an empire. His subject is the fate of worlds, the revolutions of heaven and of earth ; rebellion against the Supreme King, raised by the highest order of created beings ; the overthrow of their host, and the punishment of their crime ; the creation of a new race of reasonable creatures ; their original happiness and innocence, their forfeiture of immortality, and their restoration to hope and peace." Dr. Johnson continues to say that "this poem has, by the nature of its subject, the advantage above all others, that it is universally and perpetually interesting. All mankind will, through all ages, bear the same relation to Adam and to Eve, and must partake of that good and evil which extend to themselves."

The horizon of *Paradise Lost* is so vast that it embraces the whole space, the period with which it deals is not shorter than eternity, and not merely the globe of our earth. Milton's aspirations had, in fact, reached "one of the highest arcs that human contemplation circling upwards can make from the glassy sea whereon she stands." Walter Raleigh discusses the vastness and greatness of Milton's theme in the following words :

"A prerogative place among the great epics of the world has sometimes been claimed for *Paradise Lost*, on the ground that the theme it handles is vaster and of a more universal human interest than any handled by Milton's predecessors. It concerns itself with the fortunes, not of a city or an empire but of the human race, and with that particular event in the history of the race which has moulded all its destinies. Around this event, the plucking of an apple, are ranged, according to the strictest rules of the ancient epic, the histories of Heaven, and Earth and Hell. The scene of action is universal space. The time represented is Eternity. The characters are God and His creatures. And all these are exhibited in the clearest and most inevitable relation with the main event, so that there is not an incident, hardly a line of the poem, but leads backwards or forwards to these central lines in the Ninth Book :

> "So saying, her rash hand in evil hour
> Forth-reaching to the fruit, she plucked, she ate,
> Earth felt the wound, and Nature from her seat,
> Sighing through all her works, gave signs of woe
> That all was lost."

From this point radiates a plot so immense in scope that the history of the world from the first preaching of the gospel to the millennium occupies only same fifty lines of Milton's epilogue."

9. SOURCES OF 'PARADISE LOST'

Whatever the books from which Milton might have got a hint or suggestion or whatever the resemblance between him and any previous or contemporary writer, his originality remains unquestioned. The stamp of his genius is felt upon every line he writes—and in the handling of the theme, and in the portrayal of characters, he owes little to anybody. Verity mentions, and deals with five sources of *Paradise Lost*, but resemblances should not be pressed too closely—they may be accidental or they may be due to the unconscious process of memory. The five sources are :

1. *Adamus Exsul* (1601), a Latin tragedy written by Grotius.
2. *Adamo*, an Italian comedy by Andreini.
3. **Works of Vondel, a Dutch poet—*Lucifer* (1654).**

4. *John the Messenger* (1662) and *Adam in Banishment* (1694).
5. Caedmon's *Paraphrase*.

Milton might have read *Adamus Exsul*, for he made the acquaintance of Grotius at Paris. Verity believes that the conception of Satan's character, his escaping from Hell and surveying Eden, his invocation of the power of evil etc., might have influenced Milton. Milton's personal admiration for Grotius might account for his following him in some details.

Milton was certainly acquainted with *Adamo*. Voltaire tells the story that when Milton saw *Adamo* acted at Florence he got the hint of his epic from this comedy. Much credit cannot be given to Voltaire's story. Resemblances can be traced between *Adamo* and *Paradise Lost*. For example, in *Adamo*, the Serpent tempts Eve, and Michael drives Adam and Eve out of Paradise, as in Milton's *Paradise Lost*. Verity also notes some striking verbal resemblances.

We doubt whether Milton could have actually read the works of Vondel. Milton had grown blind when Vondel's earliest work, *Lucifer* was published, and when *Adam's Banishment* appeared, *Paradise Lost* had almost been completed. Verity imagines and Milton might have been acquainted with Vondel's works through the assistance of some reader or translator. But the fact has not been mentioned by any of his contemporaries or biographers. Milton's indebtedness to Vondel appears, therefore, to be purely conjectural. But E. Gosse argues that the great resemblance between Vondel's *Lucifer* and Milton's *Paradise Lost* can hardly be accounted for as the result of accident.

Caedmon's *Paraphrase* existed only in manuscript when Milton wrote his *Paradise Lost*. It was not published till 1655—too late for Milton to make use of it. But Caedmon's poem had substantially the same story as *Paradise Lost*—the fall of the angels, the creation of Adam and Eve and later their expulsion from Paradise. Macmillan argues that Milton seemed to be considerably indebted to Caedmon's *Paraphrase* for the framework of his epic. This is despite the fact that Milton has never mentioned Caedmon.

However, the investigation of the sources of *Paradise Lost* can yield but little substantial results. *Paradise Lost* is pre-eminently the offspring of Milton's own genius. Others might have dealt with the same subject before him ; there might be even similarities of idea and conception, but that does not mean, anything. *Paradise Lost* expresses Milton's own turn of mind, his superb imagination, his classical scholarship, his *architectones* (a word used by Matthew Arnold of Milton's marvellous structural skill displayed in *Paradise Lost*). These things could not have been borrowed—and they substantiate Milton's originality.

10. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE FALL OF MAN

The Central Event of 'Paradise Lost'

Milton sings "of Man's first disobedience," and its consequent

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results in *Paradise Lost*. Readers may be inclined to regard this as a tragic event. It is objected that Adam, if he is the hero of the poem, is ultimately shown to be defeated and thus disgraced. To this, Dr. Johnson replies, "However, if success be necessary, Adam's deceiver was at last crushed. Adam was restored to his Maker's favour and therefore man securely resumed his human rank." The fall of man does not mean the triumph of Satan ; the evil he does to Adam and Eve recoils on him.

The fall of man seems, for the time being, a tragic incident. It reacts upon nature too :

"She plucked, she ate ?
Earth felt the wound, and Nature from her seat
Sighing through all her works gave signs of woe
That all was lost !"

It is often forgotten that the second and the more important part of Milton's theme is to

"assert Eternal Providence,
And justify the ways of God to men."

However, the Fall of Man is not final. The eating of the fruit of the tree of knowledge brings him the gift of free will. Man is to be given a chance. By a wise and judicious use of free will, and not by blind obedience, he can rise again into the favour of God. So it is as much Milton's programme to trace the history of man's redemption :

"Till one greater Man
Restore and regain the blissful seat."

The Fall of Man was, in fact, a blessing in disguise. Gifted with free will man could render willing obedience to God. Adam and Eve lived at first in a happy garden—in a state of ideal bliss. Compulsory obedience was demanded of them. There was no knowledge and there could be, therefore, no sin. Ignorance was their bliss. They were less than man ; nor were they the more angel (for angels have knowledge). For their act of disobedience "they lost Eden, but they gained a conscience."

"The study of the later books of the Poem shows that the 'Fall' was in one sense an advance in their moral education. In their primitive state, we can hardly realize them to be ordinary human beings they are half angels and half human. But after they have tasted the forbidden fruit, they seem to bring themselves down to our own level, we perceive that they are of the same flesh and blood as ourselves, and far more than in the days of their happiness, our hearts go out to them in their misery."

The Fall also enriches our experience. In the words of W. Ruddick, "After the Fall has taken place our experience is further extended. We discover, through the archetypal characters Adam and Eve, whose feelings stand for those of all mankind following after them ('our first parents'), the sorrow, sense of defilement and agony of deprivation which are traditionally connected with the experience of sin. Further we watch Adam and Eve's recovery and share their wonder at the miracle of goodness reborn."

11. BOOK-WISE PLAN OF 'PARADISE LOST'

An outline of the action of the whole poem, following the sequence of the Twelve Books, may be necessary for a clear understanding of any of the Books taken apart. A. W. Verity gives the outline of the Twelve Books as follows :

Book I

The scene of action is Hell and the time nine days after the expulsion of Satan and his rebellious followers from Heaven. They lie on the burning lake, abject, prostrate and stupefied. Satan first recovers, rouses Beelzebub next to him in rank, discusses with him their position, and then makes his way from the lake to a "dreary plain" of dry land. Beelzebub follows ; Satan calls his comrades to do likewise. Rising on the wings they reach the same firm land. Their numbers and names are described. They range themselves in battle-array before Satan, who addresses them. They may still (he says) regain Heaven ; or there may be other worlds to conquer—in particular, a new world, inhabited by created beings, of which reports had come. These matters need be duly conferred of. Straightway, a vast palace—Pandemonium—is made, to serve as council-chamber. Here a council is held ; only the great Angels are present.

Book II

The scene—at first Pandemonium. The debate begins. Satan invites the counsel, "who can advise may speak." Moloch, Belial and Mammon speak, their several counsels ; last Beelzebub, who reverts to Satan's hint of the new world. Why not ruin it ? or make it their own ? or win its inhabitants to their side ? What better revenge against the Almighty ? The plan approved, but who will discover this world ? None volunteers ; and then Satan offers to undertake the journey. His offer accepted ; the council leaving Pandemonium breaks up ; the result is announced to the rest of the Angels. How they pass the time till his return, some exploring Hell (now more closely described). Meanwhile he reaches Hell-gates, is suffered to pass by Sin and Death, voyages through Chaos (described), and at last comes within sight of the Universe hung in space (*i. e.*, Chaos). We leave him directing his course towards the world.

Book III

The scene, at first, Heaven. The Almighty perceives Satan, points him out to the Son, tells what his design is, and its destined success ; tells also that Man will be saved ultimately, if he can find a Redeemer. "The son of God freely offers himself a ransom for Man" ; is accepted by the Father, and praised by the Angelic host. Meanwhile—the scene changing—Satan, having reached the outer surface (described) of the Universe, wanders through various regions (described), until, coming to the single opening in the surface, he descends into the inside of the Universe. He arrives at the sphere of the Sun ; disguising himself as a young Angel from Heaven, enquires from Uriel, the Sun-spirit, the way to Earth--pretending "desire to behold the new Creation" ; is directed by Uriel, descends again, and alights on Mt. Niphates.

Book IV

There, pausing awhile. he gives way to regret that he has rebelled, and rages at his outcast state ; passion distorts his face, so that Uriel, watching, now knows him for an evil spirit. Thence, recovering self-control, Satan journeys on towards Eden, the main scene (described) ; sees Adam and Eve (famous description of them) ; overhears what they say concerning the Tree of Knowledge, and perceives at once the means whereby to compass their fall. At nightfall he essays to tempt Eve in a dream ; is discovered by Gabriel. Who descends to Eden to defend Man. A battle between Satan and Gabriel imminent, but averted. Satan flees.

Book V

The scene is Eden. A further picture of Adam and Eve– their worship and work. Raphael (the scene having changed for a brief space to Heaven) comes to warn them of their danger, at the bidding the Almighty—so that Man. if he falls, may fall knowingly by his own fault. Raphael received and entertained ; admonishes Adam ; explains who his enemy is, and why ; which leads to an account of the rebellion in Heaven—its beginning described.

Book VI

The scene of the events narrated by Raphael—Heaven. He describes the three days' war in Heaven, at the end of which Satan and his followers were cast into Hell. The warning to Adam repeated.

Book VII

The scene Eden. Raphael describes the creation of the World, which is accomplished by the Son of God.

Book VIII

The scene is the same. Adam enquires concerning the stars and Heavenly bodies. Raphael answers doubtfully. Adam recounts his own first experience of Eden—how the Almighty forbade him to touch the Tree of Knowledge, under pain of what penalty ; how he first saw Eve. The day declines and Raphael departs—once more warning Adam.

Book IX

The scene still the same. "Adam and Eve.........go forth to their labours, which Eve proposes to divide in several places each labouring apart." Adam dissuades ; she resisting, he yields, so Satan (in the form of a serpant) finds her alone and tempts her. She eats of the fruit and induces Adam to do so. Their sense of sin and shame.

Book X

The Son of God descends to Eden, and pronounces doom on Adam and Eve and the Serpent. Meanwhile Satan, returning to Pandemonium, announces the result of his journey, and lo ! on a sudden he and his followers are changed to reptiles. Sin and Death now ascend from Hell to Eden, to claim the World as theirs ; but the Almighty foretells their ultimate overthrow by the Son, and commands the Angels to make changes in the elements and stars, whereby the Earth becomes less fair. The repentance of Adam and Eve, who see comfort in supplication to the Deity. The scene has changed often.

Book XI

The Son interceding, the Father sends Micheal to Eden (henceforth the scene) to reveal the future to Adam, above all, his hope of redemption. After announcing to Adam his approaching banishment from Eden, Michael takes him to a high mountain and unrolls before him a vision of the world's history till the Flood.

Book XII

Then he traces the history of Israel after the Flood till the coming of Christ, with the subsequent progress of Christianity ; ending with renewed promise of redemption. The fiery Cherubin now descends. Michael leads Adam and Eve to the gates of Eden ; and they go forth, sad yet consoled with the hope of salvation at the last.

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12. THE HERO OF 'PARADISE LOST'

A Controversial Issue

There has been a long controversy on the question of the hero of *Paradise Lost*. Most of the critics are of the opinion that Satan is the hero of *Paradise Lost*. Some, however, refuse to believe that Milton could make the Archfiend the hero of an epic which sought "to justify the ways of God to men." They say that either Adam or God or Christ should be taken as the hero of *Paradise Lost*. A few even believe that Milton himself is the hero of his great epic. In view of these controversial opinions some commentators believe that there is perhaps no hero of *Paradise Lost*. In Hallam's judgment, "the conception of Satan is doubtless the first effort of Milton's genius," but it is perhaps "only pedantry to talk about the hero, as if a high personage were absolutely required in an epic poem to predominate over the rest." Addison also remarks that "he that looks for a hero in *Paradise Lost*, searches for that which Milton never intended ; but if we will needs fix the name of a hero upon any person in it, it is certainly the Messiah who is the hero." We have, therefore, conflicting views as to who is the hero of *Paradise Lost*.

Satan as the Hero

Some critics believe that Satan is the hero of *Paradise Lost*. Dryden accuses Milton on this score, saying that Milton has made a wicked character the hero of his epic. There is no doubt that Satan is the most heroic of all characters in the epic. In the first two Books where he is the chief figure, he far surpasses all other characters. Though defeated, he is not vanquished. His spirit remains undaunted. He is the Archangel who contends against the Almighty God. Nothing can be more heroic, even though indiscreet, than contending against God himself. Masson says, "Satan, as all the critics have perceived, and in a wider sense than most of them have perceived, is the real hero of the poem. He and his actions are the link between that New World of Man, the infancy of which we behold in the poem, and that boundless antecedent Universe of Pre-human Existence, which the poem, when its story is taken chronologically, is the life of this great being, from the time of his yet unimpaired archangelship to that time when he flings himself into the new experimental world, and by success in his attempt, vitiates man's portion of space, and wins possession of it for a season." In this connection, Lascelles Abercrombie's views are also noteworthy : "It is surely the simple fact that if *Paradise Lost* exists for any one figure, that is Satan. It is in the figure of Satan that the imperishable significance of *Paradise Lost* is centered.

But yet Satan is not truly the hero of the epic. In spite of all his power and unyielding defiance to God, he is intellectually condemned by Milton, and in the end he himself realizes his impotence and inner helplessness. Wyatt and Low observe : "One supposed defect in the story of *Paradise Lost* has been frequently dwelt on, and that is that Satan, and not Adam, is the Hero of the epic. We think that only those whose reading of Milton has been confined to the first Two Books can be misled by this nonsensical paradox. In the first Two Books Satan is naturally made an heroic figure ; he is still an Archangel though fallen, one of the chief Archangels, and king over his fellows. His character, his power, his capacity for evil must be exalted in order to show the epic greatness of the coming conflict, in order to rouse the reader's fears for himself, human sympathy with his first parents and gratitude for his redemption. But we have to wait for *Paradise Regained* to see the steady deterioration in Satan's character. Surely, to take one instance alone, there is little of the heroic in Satan when he takes the form of a toad to whisper in Eve's ear and is stirred up by the spear of Ithuriel. Moreover, he is intellectually condemned by Milton himself, and in the end Satan himself realizes his impotence and inner helplessness. It is this weakness and utter degradation that makes Zephon scornfully retort to him in Book IV :

"Think not, revolted Spirit, thy shape the same,
Or undiminished brightness, to be known
As when thou stood'st in Heaven upright and pure.

> That glory then, when thou no more wast good,
> Departed from thee ; and thou resemblest now
> Thy sin and place of doom obscure and foul."

Satan himself is conscious of his decline and depravity :

> "Abashed the Devil stood,
> And felt how awful goodness is, and saw
> Virtue in her shape how lovely—saw, and pined
> His loss ; but chiefly to find here observed
> His lustre visible impaired."

Thus, though Satan is Milton's greatest creation, and though in the First and Second Books he is the chief figure, he is not really the true hero of the epic. There is no doubt that it is in the character of Satan that Milton has expressed his own pride, invincible temper, love of liberty, defiance of authority and heroic energy. Yet Satan is not the hero of the poem because he is not the ideal of the poet, and in the end he is not only defeated but disgraced and damned also.

Adam as the Hero

Some critics, therefore, turn to Adam and consider him to be the hero of the poem. It is Adam who acts and suffers most, and on whom the consequences have the most impact. This makes him the main character, though Eve is the more interesting and Satan the most energetic. Yet Adam, the only representative of human race, is the central figure in *Paradise Lost*. The business of the whole poem is to conduct Adam through a variety of conditions of happiness and distress, all terminating in the utmost good from a state of precarious innocence, through temptation, sin, repentance, and finally a secure dependence upon and interest in the Supreme God by the mediation of Christ. He is not such a Hero as Achilles, Ulysses, etc., capable of incredible performances ; he is one of a noble kind, such as Milton chose to write of, and found he had genius for the purpose. He is not such a conqueror as subdued armies or nations, or enemies in single combat, but his conquest was what justly gave heroic name to a person and to the poem. Dryden denied the quality of heroism to him, because he was overcome. But Dr. Johnson refuted the view of Dryden in these words : "There is no reason why the hero should not be unfortunate except established practice. Since success be necessary, Adam's deceiver was crushed, Adam was restored to his Maker's favour, and therefore, may securely resume his human rank." Addison also holds the same view. He says, "We see Adam and Eve sinking from a state of innocence and happiness into the most abject condition of sin and sorrow. Milton seems to have been sensible of this imperfection, and has endeavoured to cure it by several expedients, particularly by mortification which the great adversary of mankind meets with upon his return to the assembly of infernal spirits ; and likewise by the vision, wherein Adam at the close of the poem sees his offspring triumphing over his great enemy, and himself restored to a happier Paradise than that from which he fell." That which they have lost they regain in another form, "A Paradise within thee, happier far." In short, Satan is represented miserable in the height of his triumphs, and Adam triumphant in the height of misery.

Milton Himself as the Hero

Saurat has advanced the theory that neither Satan nor Adam but Milton himself is the hero of the poem. Though Satan is the creation of Milton himself yet Milton throws himself personally into the struggle against Satan. It is Milton who exposes, denounces, condemns and finally defeats Satan. According to Saurat Satan symbolizes the evil in Milton himself, and therefore Milton expels him out of the Paradise of his heart. Saurat says, "Milton had Satan in him and wanted to drive him out. He had felt passion, pride and sensuality. The pleasure he takes in the creation of Satan is the joy of liberating, purging himself of the evil in himself by concentrating it outside himself, into a work of art. A joy peculiar to the artist, a joy that, perhaps, was God's ultimate aim in creating the world, as we have seen." Milton, therefore, takes a personal share in the fighting against Satan, and it is he, and not God or Christ or Adam who overcomes Satan. It is Milton himself who follows Satan in all his enterprises and stigmatizes them as evil. He exposes Satan so passionately that he takes the place of Satan's real enemies. Saurat says, "He was of the Devil's party without knowing it. He knew he had passion in him and he wanted, not to suppress, but to master it. That is why he depicted it so well and combated it so fiercely." Milton is not a cold or impartial chronicler, but a bold crusader against evil, and he is not satisfied until it is completely vanquished.

Milton spares no occasion of personally abusing, condemning and cursing Satan. In describing him, he repeatedly applies to him such adjectives as 'foul', 'infernal', 'impious', 'vain', 'horrid', 'baleful', 'obdurate', etc. He does not hide his rejoicings at Satan's disaster, and heartily wishes he had not succeeded in his nefarious act of tempting Eve to transgress God's commandment. So he writes in the opening paragraph of Book IV :

> "O for that warning voice, which he who saw
> The Apocalypse heard cry in Heaven aloud,
> Then when the Dragon, put to second rout,
> Came furious down to be revenged on men,
> Woe to the inhabitants on Earth ! that now,
> While time was, our first parents had been warned
> The coming of their secret foe, and escaped,
> Haply so scaped, his mortal snare !
> Satan, now first inflamed with rage, came down,
> The temper, ere the accuser, of mankind,
> To wreak on innocent frail Man his loss
> Of that first battle, and his flight to Hell."

In this way, Milton pursues and insults Satan throughout the poem, until he finds him and his followers finally humiliated and changed into reptiles. Thus Milton takes the better of Satan in his claim to be the hero of the poem.

In yet one more sense Milton comes to the forefront and deserves to be called the hero of the poem. When Milton enters upon his enterprise he prays to the heavenly Muse to help him in his difficult task. This gives the impression as if Milton had taken the epic action as a personal enterprise for himself, and staked his honour on it in the capacity of the hero of the poem. And, again, in the same solicitous tone he thanks God when he completes his design. Thus he prays to Urania in these words :

> "What in me is dark
> Illumine, what is low raise and support,
> That to the height of this great argument
> I may assert eternal Providence,
> And justify the ways of God to men."
> —(*Book I, ll.* 22-26).

Again in Book III he prays to the Celestial Light :

> "So much the rather thou, Celestial Light,
> Shine inward, and the mind through all her powers
> Irradiate, there plant eyes, all mist from thence
> Purge and disperse, that I may see and tell
> Of things invisible to mortal sight."

These are touching lines indeed, focussing all our attention on the poet rather than on his poem. In the Seventh Book again, Milton prays to the holy Muse for spiritual and earthly protection :

> "Half yet remains unsung, but narrower bound
> With the visible diurnal sphere ;
> Standing on earth, nor rapt above the pole,
> More safe I sing with mortal voice, unchanged
> To hoarse or mute, though fallen on evil days,
> On evil days though fallen, and evil tongues,
> In darkness, and with dangers compass'd round,
> And solitude ; yet not alone, while thou
> Visit'st my slumbers nightly, or when morn
> Purples the east ; still govern though my song,
> Urania, and fit audience find, though few."

For a while we tend to forget the poem and the Celestial design behind it, and turn our mind's eye to the poet. This tends to make Milton himself the central figure, the hero of the poem. ●

13. 'PARADISE LOST' AS AN EPIC

Paradise Lost is one of the world's half a dozen great epics. Milton composed it in accordance with the established classical rules and conventions as laid down by Aristotle and practised by Homer in the *Iliad* and Virgil in the *Aenied*. However in conception, design and execution it far surpasses the classical models before it. According to Aristotle an epic has the following constituent elements or characteristics :

1. Fable.
2. Probable and marvellous theme.
3. Characters.
4. Machinery.
5. Episodes.
6. Integrity.
7. Sentiments.
8. Grand style.

Let us judge *Paradise Lost* on the basis of these characteristics.

Fable

Fable or story is the basis of the epic. Bossu is of opinion that the poet's first business is to find a moral, which his fable is afterwards to illustrate and establish. Milton chose his theme to establish a preconceived moral, *viz*., "To justify the ways of God to men."

Discussing the fable or action of *Paradise Lost*, Addison writes :

"The first thing to be considered in epic poem is the fable, which is perfect or imperfect according as the action is more or less so. The action should have three qualifications in it : first, it should be one action ; secondly, it should be an entire action ; and thirdly, it should be a great action. Homer, to preserve the unity of his action, opens his poem with the discord of his princes, and artfully interweaves in the several succeeding parts, an account of everything material which relates to them, and had passed before that fatal dissension. In the same manner Aeneas makes his first appearance on the Tuscan seas, within sight of Italy, because the action proposed to be celebrated was that of settling in Latium. But it was necessary for the reader to know what had happened to him in the taking of Troy, and in the preceding parts of his voyage. Virgil makes his hero relate it by way of episode, in the Second and Third Books. Milton in imitation of these great poets, opens his *Paradise Lost* with an infernal council plotting the Fall of Man, which is the action he proposed to celebrate ; and casts the great actions which preceded it—the war in heaven and the creation, into the Fifth, Sixth, and Seventh Books, by way of episode, in order to preserve the unity of the principal action. Aristotle himself allows that Homer has not much to boast of as to the unity of the fable. So many have been of opinion that *Aeneid* has episodes which are excrescences. On the contrary, *Paradise Lost* has none, however various and astonishing the incidents, that do not naturally arise from the subject. As Virgil, in the poem which was designed to celebrate the origin of the Roman empire, has described the birth of its great rival, the Carthiginian commonwealth, Milton with the like art, in his poem on the Fall of Man, has related the fall of those angels, who are his professional enemies—an episode, which running parallel with the main action, does not break its unity.

"The second qualification, *i.e*, the action should be entire, requires that nothing should be stated as going before it, intermixed with it, or following it not related to it. In this particular *Paradise Lost* excels the *Iliad* and the *Aeneid*. The action is contrived in hell, executed on earth and punished by heaven.

"The third qualification is greatness. The anger of Achilles was of such consequence that it embroiled the heroes of Greece, destroyed those of Asia and engaged all the gods in the faction. Aeneas's settlement in Italy produced the Roman empire and all its heroes. Milton's subject was greater than either ; it does not determine the fate of single persons or nations, out of the whole human race. Everything that is great in the whole circle of being, whether within the verge of nature or out of it, has proper part assigned to it in this admirable poem. In poetry, as in architecture, not only the whole, but the principal members should be great ; and without derogating from those wonderful performances, the *Iliad* and the *Aeneid*, we think there is much greater magnificence in the *Paradise Lost* than could have been formed on any pagan system.

"The action of the *Iliad* and that of the *Aeneid* were in themselves exceedingly short; but are so beautifully diversified and extended by the invention of episodes, and the machinery of gods, with the like poetical ornaments, that they make up an agreeable story, sufficient to employ the memory of without overcharging it. Milton's action is enriched by such a variety of circumstances that I have taken as much pleasure in reading the contents of his books, as in the best invented story I ever met with. It is possible that the traditions on which the *Iliad* and the *Aeneid* were built had more circumstances in them than the history of the Fall of Man, as it is related in scriptures. Besides, it was easier for Homer and Virgil to dash the truth with fiction as they were in no danger of offending the religion of their country by it. But as for Milton, he had not only a very few circumstances upon which to raise, but was also obliged to proceed with the greatest caution in everything that he added out of his own invention, and, indeed, notwithstanding all the restraint, he had filled his story with so many surprising incidents which bear so close an analogy with what is delivered in holy writ, that it is capable of pleasing the most delicate reader, without giving offence to the most scrupulous."

Theme

The theme of an epic, according to Aristotle, must be "probable and marvellous". In other words, the theme must be grand, elevated and marvellous, but not unconvincing or improbable. It must be some theme of national importance. Explaining the subject or theme of *Paradise Lost*, Hallam says that it is "the finest ever chosen for heroic poetry ; it is also managed by Milton with remarkable skill. The *Iliad* wants completeness ; the subject of the *Odyssey* is hardly extensive enough ; the *Aeneid* is spread over too long a space : the *Pharsalia* is open to the same criticism and the *Iliad* : the subject of the *Thebaid* possesses no interest in our eyes. Tasso is far superior to most of these : yet the Fall of Man has a more general interest than the Crusade." Dwelling upon the greatness of Milton's subject Dr. Johnson says :

"The subject of Milton is not the destruction of a city, the conduct of a colony, or the foundation of an empire. His subject is the fate of worlds, the revolutions of heaven and of earth ; rebellion against the Supreme King, raised by the highest order of created beings ; the overthrow of their host, and the punishment of their crime; the creation of a new race of reasonable creatures ; their original happiness and innocence, their forfeiture of immortality, and their restoration to hope and peace. He has involved in this account of the Fall of Man the events which preceded, and those that were to follow it : he has interwoven the whole system of theology with such propriety that every part appears to be necessary: and scarcely any recital is wished shorter for the sake of quickening the progress of the main action." No other poet in any language in the world has chosen and carried out a theme more sublime and comprehensive than Milton's. An epic poem must have a universal appeal. It must interest all people, of all times and all nations. It should not belong to a particular nation or time. In this respect, again, *Paradise Lost* is superior to the other epics. Whereas Homer's *Iliad* may be considered a Greek poem, the interest of *Paradise Lost* transcends the limits of a nation. Commenting on this aspect of the poem, Coleridge remarks : "We do not dwell on the excellent of *Paradise Lost*, because it seems attributable to Christianity itself, yet in fact the interest is wider than Christendom, and comprehends the Jewish and Mohammedan worlds : nay, still further inasmuch as it represents the origin of evil and the combat of evil and good, it contains matter of deep interest to all mankind, as forming the basis of all religion and the true occasion of all philosophy whatsoever." In the England, of Milton, the angels and devils of Jewish scriptures were more real beings, and better vouched, than any historical personages could be. The old chronicles were lies, but this was Bible truth.

Characters

An epic introduces a multitude of characters. These characters must have novelty and variety. The principal characters must have dignity and sublimity enough to be regarded as the representatives of mankind. The characters in Milton's *Paradise Lost* are the most sublime that human beings can conceive. They are God, Christ, the good and evil angels, and Adam and Eve. God and Christ, the two supreme characters, are outside the range of human comprehension. The angels include Raphael and Michael. The virtue of Raphael is mild and placid, of easy condescension and free communication. In his tenderness and friendship for man Raphael shows such a dignity and condescension in all his speech and behaviour as are suitable to a superior nature. Michael is regal and lofty as behoves the dignity of a spirit of the highest rank. Abdiel and Gabriel appear occasionally, and act as every incident requires ; the solitary fidelity of Abdiel is very amiably painted. Of the evil angels the characters are more diversified. Satan is the rebel Archfiend. He revolts against God and preaches disaffection against the Almighty. Yet Milton portrays him so skilfully that he appears to be the most exalted and most depraved being. As Dr. Johnson says : "There is in Satan's speeches little that can give pain to pious ear. The language of rebellion cannot be the same with that of obedience. The malignity of Satan foams in haughtiness and obstinacy ; but his expressions are commonly general and not otherwise offensive than as they are wicked." "The spirit of Milton," says Macaulay, "are unlike those of almost all other writers. His fiends, in particular, are wonderful creations. They are not metaphysical abstractions. They are not wicked men. They are not ugly beasts. Their characters are, like their forms, marked by a certain dim resemblance to those of men, but exaggerated to gigantic dimensions, and veiled in mysterious gloom. Perhaps the gods and demons of Aeschylus may best bear a comparison with the angels and devils of Milton." As for human characters there are only two—Adam and Eve. Dr. Johnson says : "To Adam and Eve are given, during their innocence, such sentiments as innocence can generate and utter. Their love is pure benevolence and mutual veneration ; their repasts are without luxury, and their diligence without toil. Their addresses to their Maker have little more than the voice of admiration and gratitude. Fruition left them nothing to ask, and innocence left them nothing to fear." But with guilt enter distrust and discord, mutual accusation, and stubborn self-defence : they regard each other with alienated minds, and dread their Creator as the avenger of their transgression. At last they seek shelter in His mercy, soften to repentance and melt in supplication." "Milton," says Hallam, "has displayed great skill in the delineation of Adam and Eve : he does not dress them up, after the fashion of orthodox theology, in the fancied robes of primitive righteousness. They are innocent, of course, but not less frail than their posterity ; nor except one circumstance, do we find any sign of depravity super-induced upon their transgression. It might even be made a question for profound theologians whether Eve, by taking amiss what Adam had said, and by self-conceit, did not sin before she tasted the fatal apple." Thus in *Paradise Lost* we have a large variety of characters, from the most sublime to the most depraved. They are all universal characters in whom man can never lose interest. "It is impossible," says Addison, "for any of its readers, whatever nation, country or people he may belong to, not to be related to the persons who are the principal actors in it ; but what is still infinitely more to its advantage, the principal actors are not only our progenitors, but our representatives. We have an actual interest in everything they do, and no less than our utmost happiness lies at stake in their behaviour."

Machinery

A great epic poet employs an elaborate supernatural machinery to produce the effect of the 'marvellous'. In *Paradise*

Lost everything is wrought through supernatural machinery. Everything is done under the immediate and visible direction of Heaven. No part of the action could have been accomplished by any other means. It contains the history of a miracle, of Creation and Redemption, and displays the power and the mercy of the Supreme Being. In Milton's times the angels and devils of Jewish scriptures were believed to be more real beings than any historical personages could be. The old chronicles were lies, but this was Bible truth.

Episodes

"Of Episodes," says Dr. Johnson, "there are only two, contained in Raphael's relation of the war in heaven, and Michael's prophetic account of the changes to happen in this world. Both are closely connected with the great action ; one was necessary as a warning, the other as a consolation."

Integrity of Design

Integrity of design is one of the most important requisites of an epic. In this long narrative poem running into twelve Books, there are occasional episodes, digressions, long narrative and descriptive passages, but they are all so well interwoven into the main theme that they neither appear disjoined nor do they hinder or retard the main action. Dr. Johnson says : "He has involved in his account of the Fall of Man the events which preceded, and those that were to follow it ; he has interwoven the whole system of theology with such propriety that every part appears to be necessary, and scarcely any recital is wished shorter for the sake of quickening the progress of the main action." Dr. Johnson continues to say : "To the completeness or integrity of the design nothing can be objected ; it has distinctly and clearly what Aristotle requires, a beginning, a middle, and an end. There is perhaps no poem of the same length, from which so little can be taken without apparent mutilation. The short digressions at the beginning of the Third, Seventh, and Ninth Books, might doubtless be spared ; but superfluities so beautiful, who would take away ? Perhaps no passages are more frequently or more attentively read than those extrinsic paragraphs ; and since the end of poetry is pleasure, that cannot be unpoetical with which all are pleased."

An objection is, however, brought against its design that it does not begin with the beginning. It rather begins with the middle. The defeat of Satan and his host with which the First Book begins occurs in the middle of the story. But this is no defect. This is in conformity with classical conventions because this gives an opportunity to the poet for retrospection and anticipation. Horace advises that an epic should plunge in the middle of the narrative. Hence *Paradise Lost* begins in the middle—there is retrospection in Raphael's narration of war and anticipation in Michael's visions of the fortunes of Adam's descendants. This satisfies classical canons.

Sentiments

As *Paradise Lost* primarily deals with supernatural powers and agencies, there is very little scope for the expression of human sentiments. Adam and Eve are the only two human characters. Their sentiments both of fear and repentance have, of course, been beautifully and forcefully rendered. The anguish arising from the horrors attending the sense of the Divine displeasure are very justly and powerfully described. But the real greatness of Milton lies in the fact that he has rendered supernatural powers as human beings and ascribed to them human sentiments. Dr. Johnson says that "the sentiments, as expressive of manners, or appropriated to characters are, for the greater part, unexceptionally just."

But the central sentiment in *Paradise Lost* is the moral sentiment. Dr. Johnson says : "Of his moral sentiments it is hardly praise to affirm that they excel those of all other poets ; for his superiority he was indebted to his acquaintance with the sacred writings. The ancient epic poets, wanting the light of revelation, were very unskilful teachers of virtue ; their principal characters may be great, but they are not amiable. The reader may rise from their works with a greater degree of active or passive fortitude. and sometimes of prudence ; but he will be able to carry away few precepts of justice, and none of mercy." The distinguishing excellence of Milton lies in the sublimity of thought. In fact, in the greatness of sentiments he triumphs over all the poets, both ancient and modern, with the exception of Homer. It is impossible for the imagination of man to distend itself with greater ideas than those which he has laid together in the First, Second and Sixth Books. The Seventh, which describes the creation of the world, is likewise wonderfully sublime."

Nevertheless, want of human character and human sentiment is always felt in *Paradise Lost*. Dr. Johnson says : "Pleasure and terror are indeed genuine sources of poetry ; but poetical pleasure must be such as human imagination can at least conceive, and poetical terror such as human strength and fortitude may combat. The good and evil of eternity are too ponderous for the wings of wit : the mind sinks under them in passive helplessness, content with calm, belief and humble adoration."

Diction and Style

Milton's style in *Paradise Lost* is genuinely grand. Here is a beautiful harmony between sublimity of thought and sublimity of style. Milton's blank verse remains unsurpassed in point of eloquence, force, grandeur and sublime beauty. His use of the heroic simile remains unsurpassed by any other English poet.

The language of an epic must be sublime, and for this purpose it should deviate from common phrases and forms of speech, though it should avoid the other extreme of being unnatural and stiff. Aristotle observes that a sublime style can be formed by three methods—by the use of metaphors, by making use of the idioms of other tongues, and by lengthening of a phrase by the addition of words, which may either be inserted or omitted, as also by the extending or contracting of particular words by the insertion or omission of certain syllables. In *Paradise Lost*, Milton has used all the methods for elevating his language. His metaphors are bold, just, and seldom out of place. He has infused a great many foreign words in his language, and in conformity to the third method, he has given a great variety to his verse by suppressing a syllable in several words, and shortening those of two syllables into one. By these methods Milton's language is raised to a level of sublimity hardly attained by any other poet in the English language.

Besides conforming to the rules of an epic as laid down by Aristotle, Milton makes use of the conventions adopted by other writers of epics. For example, it was a regular practice with the epic poets to begin by invoking the Muse. Milton also begins *Paradise Lost* by lifting his voice in prayer to the Holy Spirit for instruction and support. In the second place, like Virgil he makes use of the device of "historical anticipation." In the Twelfth Book Adam is permitted to foresee in a vision the awful consequences of his sin in all the corruption of the world till the time of the flood after which Michael takes up the theme, sketches for him the history of mankind onward till the coming of Christ, and outlines the work of Redemption presently to be accomplished.

Thus whether we consider *Paradise Lost* from the point of view of classical rules, or conventions, or of innovations, it is the greatest epic in the English language. In fact, Milton is counted among the greatest epic poets of the world. The place of Milton among the great epic poets of the world has been assessed by Dryden in the following poetical lines :

> "Three poets in three distant Ages born,
> Greece, Italy, and England did adorn,
> The first in Loftiness of thought surpast,
> The next in Majesty, in both the last.
> The Force on Nature could no further go
> To make a third she joined the other two."

14. THE IMPACT OF REFORMATION ON 'PARADISE LOST'

The Renaissance and Reformatory or Puritanical threads run parallel to or across each other in Milton's poetry, specially in *Paradise Lost*. In fact, the Reformatory or Puritanical thought is the very basis of the plan and purpose of *Paradise Lost*. *Paradise Lost* is essentially the work of a Puritan. It is a beautiful poetical rendering of the basic precepts and tenets of all the Christian scriptures. It is the Bible poetized by one of the greatest poets of the world. It is a poet's vindication of the ways of God to men. Some critics rightly hold that it is the duty of every Christian to read *Paradise Lost* and meditate upon it with the faith and devotion of a true Christian. Not to read *Paradise Lost* is not to be a true Christian.

The Reformation

Milton was one of the greatest leaders of the Reformation movement in England. He was a liberal Puritan. He was born and brought up in a Puritan family, whose parish priest was Richard Stock. He was educated at St. John's College, Cambridge, when William Perkins, the great English Calvinist preacher was at the height of his influence in that university. Milton was greatly influenced by that body of Calvinist doctrines to which Calvin had supplied the emotional as well as the intellectual ingredient. Puritanism gained further strength by concentrating fiercely on certain phases of Christian doctrine. Tillyard says : "In traditional theology the two main ways of access to God were through the contemplation of natural things and through the imitation of Christ. The Puritans did not deny these ways but they were more interested in another main matter of orthodox theology : the dogma derived from certain chapters of St. Paul. From this dogma they elaborated a regular drama of salvation, which was their living mythology. The drama began with God's creation of mankind from nothing and proceeded to the utter depravity of man through the disobedience of Adam and through man's subsequent failure to follow God's will as declared in his law. In this process Satan was of prime importance, since it was he who defeated Adam, the old Man, in the Garden. The process was reversed by Christ, the New Man, and principally when he defeated Satan in the Wilderness. Out of depraved humanity God by His grace chose out certain favoured people, the rest being left for damnation. Through the victorious act of Christ these became more numerous than under the old dispensation. "Milton made this the theological basis of his *Paradise Lost*. It is this theological doctrine that has been so beautifully and artistically worked out in *Paradise Lost*. It is no paradox, therefore, to say that "the greatest of England's Puritans was also the greatest of her artists."

Poetical Offering to God

Milton's *Paradise Lost* is the poetical offering on the altar of God. A poet is an inspired mouthpiece of God. Milton believed that God had blessed him with "that one talent"—the poetical genius—with which he had vowed "to serve my Maker". In 1942 be wrote :

"Poetical powers are the inspired gift of God rarely besrowed ......and are of power, beside the office of a pulpit, to public civility, to allay the perturbation of mind and set the affections in right tune ; to celebrate in glorious and lofty hymns, the throne and equipage of God's almightiness, and what he works, and what he suffers to be wrought with high providence in his church ; to sing victorious agonies of martyrs and saints, the deeds and triumphs of just and pious nations, doing valiantly through faith against enemies of Christ,

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to deplore the general relapses of kingdoms and states from justice and God's true worship."

This is Milton the great Puritan dedicating his poetry to the service of God. This is what he propounds in opening part of *Paradise Lost*, Book I :

> "What in me is dark
> Illumine, what is low raise and support ;
> That to the highth of this great argument
> I may assert Eternal Providence,
> And justify the ways of God to men."

It was Milton, the Puritan poet, living in a Puritan environment, who selected the Fall of Man as the theme for his great epic, because in the treatment of the Fall he meant to condemn the mental levity of Man, who is prone to forget the importance of his own actions. Adam and Eve casually commit what they imagine is a trifling error, and for which they are punished with a doom out of all proportion to their crime :

> "Of Man's first disobedience, and the fruit
> Of that forbidden Tree whose mortal taste
> Brought death into the World, and all our woe,
> With loss of Eden........."

Milton's treatment of the Fall offers the obvious meaning that it is the first business of Man to understand the issues of life, and to be aware of the importance of every trivial act. This is the central philosophy of Puritanism—to take care of every little action lest you should stray in the wrong path and invoke damnation on yourself. This moral ardour is present from the very beginning in all his poetry, but in *Paradise Lost* it comes to the forefront.

Divine Order

In *Paradise Lost* Milton upholds and justifies the Divin Order infallibly prevailing in the universe. Milton holds that God is the supreme commander of the universe, under whose benevolent command there is a perfectly ordered universe with all its parts not only interconnected but properly balanced. Tillyard says : "Milton's belief in this traditional world picture was emotionally the most powerful theological element in his poetry, and it finds expression without the least sign of conflict. We know of Miltion's love of the *Psalms* and the *Book of Job* ; and we may conjecture that he loved them largely because of the many passages that describe the glories of creation and glory of their Creator in them. The liveliness of the universe, the bounty of its phenomena, and the beautiful order in which God disposed them were matters of perpetually passionate belief throughout Milton's life." *Paradise Lost* conveys his entire belief in the unity of creation and the informing power of God that both makes and preserves it :

> "O Adam, one Almighty is, from whom
> All things proceed, and up to him return,
> If not depraved from good created all

> Such to perfection, one first matter all,
> Induc'd with various forms, various degrees,
> Of substance, and in things that live of life ;
> But more refin'd, more spirituous, and pure,
> As nearer to him placed or nearer tending
> Each in their several active spheres assigned,
> Till body up to spirit work, in bounds
> Proportioned to each kind."

This is God's glory, and His unbounded love and benevolence. For these favours we should all thankfully offer our adorations to God, as do all angels and all powers of Nature. Speaking first of the stars Adam says :

> "These then, though unbeheld in deep of night
> Shine not in vain, nor think, though men were none,
> That Heav'n would want spectators, God want praise.
> Millions of spiritual creatures walk the Earth
> Unseen, both when we wake, and when we sleep ;
> All these with ceaseless praise His works behold
> Both day and night : how often from the steep
> Of echoing Hill or Thicket have we heard
> Celestial voices to the midnight air,
> Sole, or responsive each to other note
> Singing their great Creator : oft in bands,
> While they keep watch, or nightly rounding walk
> With Heav'nly touch of instrumental sounds
> In full harmonic number join'd, their songs
> Divide the night, and lift our thoughts to Heaven."

In the same spirit there is the hymn of praise Adam and Eve sing before Raphael's visit (Book V, *ll.* 153-208). It is Milton's reverent tribute to the original. But it is also a traversing of the chain of Being from the angels down to the lowest animate existence, with the suggestion that all this marvellous wealth of life makes up an organic whole in praising the Creator. The Puritans believed that the best prayer of God is to have absolute faith in Him :

> "Henceforth I learn, that to obey is best,
> And love with fear the only God, to walk
> As in his presence, ever to observe
> His providence, and on him sole depend,
> Merciful over all his works, with good
> Still overcoming evil, and by small
> Accomplishing great things, by things deem'd weak
> Subverting worldly strong, and worldly wise
> By simply meek."

Discipline and Liberty

The next prime religious matter that lies at the very heart of Milton's emotional life as expressed in his poetry is the joint doctrine of discipline and liberty. Milton was a man of varied and powerful passions, in whom the joy of living and the sense of life's wonder and bounty were fierce and strong. But with equal strength he believed in order and discipline, for only through order could passion and joy be fulfilled instead of squandered. While servitude consisted in a confined and imposed choice, and licence in an undisciplined and wasteful and hence unfulfilled choice ; liberty consisted in freely choosing that maximum of bounty which can only be achieved by the discipline appropriate to the chooser. Obedience to the will and law of God is the highest religion. The least transgression of the Divine law or Moral law leads to damnation. Undue liberty leads to corruption and licentiousness. In Milton's own age, during the reign of Charles I, and again after the Restoration, moral order and discipline had been thrown to the winds. Even the clergy had gone corrupt and avaricious. This thought fills Milton with the typical Puritanic rage :

> "Wolves shall succeed for teachers, grievous Wolves
> Who all the sacred mysteries of Heav'n
> To their own vile advantages shall turn,
> Of lucre and ambition, and the truth
> With superstitions and traditions taint,
> Left only in those written Records pure,
> Though not but by the Spirit understood."

Real bondage is the bondage of sin, and these bondages of sin can be broken and spiritual freedom attained only through the Saviour. Tillyard says : "The other matter of liberty in which Milton's emotions are involved in a more complicated way is that specifically Christian liberty which could be attained when the sinner, born to sin, had been redeemed by Christ and adopted by God, being made free from the bondage and incrimination of the Old Law." The Fall, original sin, and redemption through Christ—in this moral cycle Miton had deep faith. This is summed up in the following speech of Michael :

> "Obedience to the Law of God, impos'd
> On penalty of death, and suffering death,
> The penalty to thy transgression due,
> And due to theirs which out of thine will grow :
> So only can high justice rest appaid.
> The Law of God exact he shall fulfil
> Both by obedience and by Love, though love
> Alone fulfil the Law ; thy punishment
> He shall endure by coming in the Flesh
> To a reproachful life and cursed death,
> Proclaiming Life to all who shall believe
> In his redemption, and that his obedience
> Imputed becomes theirs by Faith, his merits
> To save them, not their own, though legal works."

15. THE IMPACT OF RENAISSANCE ON 'PARADISE LOST'

Milton was a child of the Renaissance and Reformation. In essentials Renaissance and Reformation are not opposed but complementary to each other. Reformation was, in fact, only one aspect of the Renaissance. Their co-operation had been mainly responsible for the essential greatness of Elizabethan literature in which a passionate love of beauty is combined with religious fervour and a strenuous moral idealism. But it is essentially the Renaissance spirit that governs the poetic world of Milton. Milton the poet is Milton the Puritan enlivened and liberalized by the Renaissance spirit. Hence all the salient features of the Renaissance are beautifully blended in Milton's poetry.

Renaissance Learning

Paradise Lost is the product of Renaissance learning, Renaissance art and literature, and Renaissance philosophy and metaphysics. Milton's cosmology is based on Ptolemaic theory which was the most important Renaissance theory of cosmology. His poetry is beautifully enriched with classical mythology and learning. This is the general trend of his poetry from the earliest to the latest phase. The Renaissance element is paramount in the two early poems—*L' Allegro* and *Il Penseroso*. In *L'Allegro* there are echoes of romance, chivalry, pastoral music and dance, which are all essentially Renaissance in character. In *Il Penseroso* the poet dwells upon his love of Pagan learning, and in imagination he hunts the Cathedral, and enjoys the beauty of its dim aisles and the sound of the organ. Even his *Comus*, which is a serious moral and religious play, has literary affiliations with the Renaissance. In form and method, *Lycidas* is a pastoral elegy in the tradition of Virgil, Bion and Moschus. The entire theme of *Samson Agonistes* is classical. So that the Renaissance spirit makes itself felt in every major work of Milton. Almost all his famous narrative and descriptive passages in *Paradise Lost* have Medieval or Pagan allusions and references in them. In the description of Eden, for example, Milton collects at one place all the wealth of the medieval world :

> "Not that fair field
> Of Enna, where Proserpine gathering flowers,
> Herself a fairer flower, by gloomy Dis
> Was gathered—which cost Deres all the pain
> To seek her through the world—nor that sweet grove
> Of Daphne, by Orontes and the inspired
> Castalian spring, might with this Paradise
> Of Eden strive ; nor that Nyseian isle,
> Girt with the river Triton, where old Cham,
> Whom Gentiles Ammon call and Libyan Jove,
> His Amalthea, and her florid son,
> Young Bacchus, from his stepdame Rhea's eye ;
> Nor where Abassin kings their issue guard,

Mount Amara (though this by some supposed
True Paradise)."

Humanism

A very important aspect of the Renaissance was Humanism. It asserted the essential dignity of man as man. Man had come to be regarded as the crown and roof of all creation, the measure of all things. Man was believed to be the centre of all creation and all philosophy. The goal of life could be achieved not by the study of God but by the study of man. It extolled human reason as well as intention and revealed truth as the instrument of its knowledge. It, therefore, turned to the scriptures for the best record of man's nature in its relation to God, of righteousness and love and then to the classical literature, where it found a wider revelation of man as an individual and a citizen

Milton was a staunch individualist. He was a champion of individual and social liberty and freedom. Therefore Milton found a very deep spiritual and intellectual kinship between the Renaissance ideal of human freedom and his own. According to the Renaissance philosophy, a life in which man is not responsible for his own actions is meaningless. He shows that God in his omniscience has foreknowledge of man's fate but He leaves man's will free. No one has been pre-elected to salvation or damnation. All have the chance of salvation, but certain men have been singled out for special eminence, good or bad. This independence of the individual is shown not only in Adam, but also in Satan, whose unbending resolution is here exhibited in its most magnificent and ideal form. Self-exaltation is the motive of all Satan's conduct. Even in his misery and defeat he retains his individual worth and dignity. He continues to possess invincible courage and will-power even in his worst state of fall and suffering. He says to his fallen compeers :

"Fallen Cherub, to be weak is miserable,
Doing or suffering.............."

He knows no defeat :

"What though the field be lost ?
All is not lost ; the unconquerable will,
And study of revenge, immortal hate,
And courage never to submit or yield :
And what is else not to be overcome ?
That glory never shall his wrath or might
Extort from me. To bow and sue for grace
With suppliant knee, and deify his power
Who, from the terror of this arm, so late
Doubted his empire—that were low indeed ;
That were an ignominy and shame beneath
This downfall ; since by fate the strength of gods
And this empyreal substance cannot fail."

Independence, to the Renaissance man, was the one ambition and goal of life. He retained an independent mind and spirit even in the most abject situation of life :

> "A mind not to be changed by place or time,
> The mind in its own place, and in itself
> Can make a Heaven of Hell, a Hell of Heaven.
> ……………………………… …………
> Here we may reign secure ; and in my choice,
> To reign is worth ambition, though in Hell ;
> Better to reign in Hell than serve in Heaven."

This is the true Renaissance spirit that Milton so strongly expresses through Satan. The Renaissance man had an insatiable thirst for knowledge, for adventure and explorations. It is this thirst that impels Satan, against all dangers and risks, to break away from the Hell and explore the immeasurable Chaos and innumerable stars and the newly-created human world. This is essentially the Renaissance spirit.

Love of Beauty

Beauty is the central creed of Renaissance. The Renaissance artists were great lovers of beauty—beauty of Nature and beauty of the human form. They loved beauty in all its facets—sensuous, intellectual and spiritual. Milton, though a Puritan, was a passionate devotee of beauty. He wrote to his friend Diodati : "Whatever the Deity may have bestowed upon me in other respects, he has certainly inspired me, if any ever were inspired, with a passion for good and the beautiful. Nor did Circe, according to the fable, even seek her daughter Proserpine with such unceasing solicitude as I have sought this idea of the beautiful in all the forms and appearances of things, for many are the shapes of things divine. Day and night I am wont to continue my search."

This love of beauty we find at its best in *Paradise Lost*, *Book IV*. Here we have the memorable graphic description of Paradise, of the garden of Eden, and of Adam and Eve in this natural world of beauty. In a long passage of about two hundred lines Milton describes the beauty of Paradise and garden of Eden in it. Summing up this beautiful description of Paradise Milton writes :

> "Thus was this place,
> A happy rural seat of various view :
> Groves whose rich trees wept odorous gums and balm ;
> Others whose fruit, burnished with golden rind,
> Hung amiable—Hesperian fables true,
> If true, here only—and of delicious taste,
> Betwixt them lawns, or level downs, and flocks
> Grazing the tender herb, were interposed,
> Or palmy hillock, or the flowery lap
> Of some irriguous valley spread her store,
> Flowers of all hue, and without thorn the rose.
> Another side, umbrageous grots and caves

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Of cool recess, o'er which the mantling vine
Lays forth her purple grape, and gently creeps
Luxuriant ; meanwhile murmuring waters fall
Down the slope hills dispersed, or in a lake,
That to the fringed bank with myrtle crowned
Her crystal mirror holds, unite their streams."

In a beautifnl shady grove of this garden are seen Adam and Eve in their breath-taking pristine beauty :

"Two of far nobler shape, erect and tall,
God-like erect, with native honour clad
In naked majesty, seemed lords of all,
And worthy seemed ; for in their looks divine
The image of their glorious Maker shone."

And here is the description of Eve :

"She, as a veil down to the slender waist,
Her unadorned golden tresses wore
Dishevelled, but in wanton ringlets waved
As the vine curls her tendrils—which implied
Subjection, but required with gentle sway,
And by her yielded, by him best received
Yielded, with coy submission, modest pride,
And sweet, reluctant amorous delay."

And then comes that superb passage in which the poet describes the first nuptial bed and the first nuptial meeting of Adam and Eve :

"Here, in close recess,
With flowers, garlands, and sweet-smelling herbs,
Espoused Eve decked first her nuptial bed,
And heavenly choirs the hymenean sung,
What day the genial Angel to our sire
Brought her, in naked beauty more adorned,
More lovely, than Pandora, whom the gods
Endowed with all their gifts.................
....
These, lulled by nightingales, embracing slept,
And no their naked limbs the flowery roof
Showered roses, which the morn repaired."

The poet fondly tells them :

"Sleep on,
Blest pair ! and, O ! yet happiest, if ye seek
No happier state, and know to know no more !"

Here is the high watermark of sensuous beauty in poetry. There is no wonder then if Keats and the Pre-Raphaelite poets took Milton for a model in picturesque sensuous beauty. The Renaissance love of beauty could go no further. Hilaire Belloe, commenting on the element of sensuous beauty in Milton's poetry says : "Beauty was for him all his life an appetite, an object and a guide. Of all the English poets he is the one for whom sudden beauty in diction seems most

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inevitable, in whom you never know under what incongruous conditions beauty at white heat will not appear, shining through an immortal line. He knew that he was the vehicle, and after a fashion, the priest of beauty, and he worshipped at that shrine all his life—to our immense advantage." His words and phrases have a strange evocative power in them, and they conjure up such subtle pictures of elfin beauty that they haunt our imagination as spirits haunt the forlorn graveyard.

Thus Milton brought about a fusion and synthesis of the two great movements of his age—Renaissance and Reformation. "Milton's true kinship is not with Bunyan or Baxter—the strictly Puritan writers—not yet altogether with Cromwell and the heroes of the battle for religious and political liberty, but with ancient classical poets, and his immediate Elizabethan predecessors—Shakespeare, Spenser—whose spiritual aspirations were united with the human passion for truth and beauty, and who trusted the imagination as an important medium for the attainment of their ideal. Milton had nothing in him of the morbid scrupulosity which is such an inhuman feature in the Puritan sect. His was a large nature which demanded a free expansion of life. That is why he is a nearer kin to Shakespeare than to Pope. Like the great Elizabethan writers he succeeded in combining a passionate love of beauty with religious fervour and a strenuous moral idealism, and he was the last poet in England to achieve this, as after him the gulf between the movements became too wide to be bridged again. His *Paradise Lost*, though written with the express purpose of 'justifying the ways of God to men,' is the great surviving monument of the immense mass of Renaissance writing dealing with Biblical material."

16. HUMAN INTEREST IN 'PARADISE LOST'

Lack of Human Interest

The theme of *Paradise Lost* is essentially superhuman. Its principal protagonists are angels, whether good or evil. The scene of action is largely Heaven, or Hell, or unbounded space. The world is indeed the scene of action for sometime, but this world is quite different from our present world. There are only two human characters, but even they are quite different from us not only in their way of living but also in their feelings and thoughts. Therefore *Paradise Lost* has very little direct human interest in it. In this connection Dr. Johnson says: "The plan of *Paradise Lost* has this inconvenience, that it comprises neither human actions nor human manners. The man and woman who act and suffer, are in a state which no other man or woman can ever know. The reader finds no transaction in which he can be engaged; beholds on condition in which he can by any effort of imagination place himself; he has, therefore, little natural curiosity or sympathy." The want of human interest is, therefore, its basic flaw.

Adam and Eve

There are only two human characters—Adam and Eve. But even they are not man and woman such as any we know : if they would not be Adam and Eve. They are the original Man and Woman, not types, but prototypes : if they were not set apart from ordinary humanity they would not be Adam and Eve. These two human figures, living as they do in isolated perfection, and sinlessness, without children and friends, without learning or art or business, without hopes or fears or memories, without the experience of disease or the expectation of death, and therefore, without joy, as we know as human beings, of life and health, could not possibly provide material for actions which may have direct significance for ordinary mortals so utterly unlike them. The fact that *Paradise Lost* has far less of ordinary human life in it, and far less variety of action, than the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, was probably unavoidable and also it was probably Milton's deliberate intention. It was not his nature to care much about the small doings of ordinary people in everyday life. He was dealing with a lofty theme concerning the fortunes of the whole human race, and his plot was so immense in its scope that there was no room for the minute portrayal of human character and action.

Their Human Significance

However, a careful examination of *Paradise Lost* shows that it is not altogether lacking in human interest and that the actions and manners of Adam and Eve have sufficient human significance. There are none of the everyday occurrences, contentions, disputes, wars, fightings, jealousies, trades, professions and the common handicrafts of life, but in the characters of Adam and Eve we find that the die was cast, and in them the doom of humanity was sealed. In them

> "The generations were prepared : the pangs,
> The internal pangs, were ready, the dread strife
> Of poor humanity's afflicted will
> Struggling in vain with ruthless destiny."

With the loss of Eden we trace all the future problems and sufferings of humanity. But during the short interval of their stay in Paradise before the day is overcast with tempest, we find these innocent creatures having the first delicious taste of life. They had had nothing to do but feel their own happiness. All things seemed to acquire fresh sweetness, and to be clothed with fresh beauty in their sight. In this stage they represent man and woman in the highest innocence and perfection. When they afterwards fell and were driven out of Paradise, they tasted the first fruits of bitterness as they had done of bliss. But their pangs were such as a pure spirit might feel at the sight—their tears "such as the angels weep". They had received their unlooked for happiness as a free gift from their Creator's hands, as they submitted to its loss, not without sorrow, but without impious and stubborn repining :

> "In either hand the hast'ning angel caught
> Our ling'ring parents, and to the eastern gate

> Let them direct, and down the cliff as fast
> To the subjected plain ; then disappeared,
> They looking back, all th' eastern side beheld
> Of Paradise, so late their happy seat,
> Wav'd over by that flaming brand, the gate
> With dreadful faces throng'd and fiery arms :
> Some natural tears they drop, but wip'd them, soon ;
> The world was all before them, where to choose
> Their place of rest, and providence their guide."

At this stage Adam and Eve represent man and woman in the most abject stage of guilt and infirmity. Of course in their action there is none of the agony of mind, and fierceness of the intemperate passion, which is the result of the habitual struggles of will with circumstances, but this would have destroyed the beauty of the picture, and also it would have been inconsistent with the character of the first man and woman committing their first sin. But this action is highly significant for all humanity, as the tragedy of Eden is the tragedy of the whole human race and every human being, to whatever country, nation or race he may belong ; he feels an intimate relation with Adam and Eve. In fact Milton's intention was to emphasize the importance of the human element, as he was profoundly concerned with "man, the heart of man, and human life."

Perfection of Human Happiness

Adam and Eve as husband and wife in Paradise enjoy perfect human happiness. They are our first ancestors, the progenitors, of the human race. Therefore their earliest mode of living, their movements and actions, their thoughts and feelings cannot be without interest to us. They live a life of perfect happiness in the pleasure garden of Paradise. They are the masters of their little world, and their only occupation is to trim and tend their heavenly garden. Milton describes their bilssful life in the following memorable lines :

> "Thus talking, hand in hand, alone they passed
> On to their blissful bower. It was a place
> Chosen by the sovran planter, when he framed
> All things to Man's delightful use.
>
> ……………………………………………
>
> Here, in close recess,
> With flowers, garlands, and sweet-smelling herbs,
> Espoused Eve decked first her nuptial bed,
> And heavenly choirs the hymenean sung,
> What day the genial Angel to our sire,
> Brought her, in naked beauty more adorned,
> More lovely, than Pandora, whom the gods
> Endowed with all their gifts.
> These, lulled by the nightingales, embracing slept,
> And on their naked limbs the flowery roof
> Showered roses, which the morn repaired."

Such was the blessed state of conjugal happiness of our "general parents." Who can be disinterested in their happiness, which in its depleted form we enjoyed to this day, and their fall from this state of happiness which brought misery and death to all of us ? Had they not transgressed the Divine ordinance and fallen from Paradise, we would all have retained our blessed state and immortality. We all pay for the sin committed by our first parents. How can, then, we be disinterested in the story of their life and death ?

Their Marital Life

Moreover, though the actions and manners of Adam and Eve have not much relation with everyday occurrences in human life, yet certain aspects of it are described in such a manner that we find much affinity with them. For example, the character of Eve at the time of the temptation and then her obstinate arguments with Adam who ultimately surrenders and falls in line with her, have an unmistakable human touch. We see in them the fundamental characteristics of man and woman of all times. In Paradise, Eve is already fairly a woman of this world. In her dispute with Adam, she speaks to him as a mortal female in an irritated mood :

> "But that thou shouldst my firmness therefore doubt
> To God or thee, because we have a Foe
> May tempt it, I expect it, I expect not to hear.
>
> ……………………………………………
>
> Thoughts, which how found they harbour in thy breast,
> Adam, misthought of her to thee so dear ?"

She believes like all mortal women that it is a sign of love and faith of her man that he should permit her to "have her way". And it is not so much her vanity and curiosity as her wilfulness, and in particular her resentment against what seems to her the ungenerosity of the prohibition that is her undoing. Like a woman she is centred in her actions and emotions and through them she falls, and once fallen she is to them a prey. There is a conflict in her mind whether she should tell of her sin to her Adam and share it with him, or not, by which act she may render herself more equal and perhaps superior to him and thus draw his love more. On the other hand, she fears that if God has seen her sin, and punishes her with death, then, Adam, wedded to another Eve, shall live with her enjoying, when she will be extinct. For her there is nothing more horrible than to think of this :

> "So dear I love him that with him all deaths
> I could endure, without him live no life."

And when Adam agrees to share her guilt, it is with sincere feelings that she embraces him with joy :

> "Tenderly wept, much won that he his love
> Had so ennobled, as of choice to incur
> Divine displeasure for her sake, or death."

She behaves like a woman when she resorts to the reproaches of the first of husbands for not staying at home :

"Was I to have never parted from thy side ?
As good have grown there still a lifeless rib,
Being as I am, why didst not thou, the head,
Command me absolutely not to go ?"

And she is herself above all in her the tenderness and repentance and she assumes the whole burden of fault, especially in the lines :

"Forsake me not thus, Adam, witness Heav'n
What love sincere...........
Between us two let there be peace ; both joining,
As joined in injuries ...."

Referring to these lines Dr. Johnson remarked : "Her language is always a woman's, and the broken rhythm is that of a woman's pleading."

And Adam also behaves like a mortal man when he ultimately surrenders to Eve, which means the conquest of reason by romantic love :

"However, I with thee have fixt my lot.
Certain to undergo like doom, if Death
Consort with thee, Death is to me Life :
So forcible within my heart I feel
The bond of Nature draw me to my own,
My own in thee, for what thou art is mine ;
Our stage cannot be severed, we are one,
One Flesh ; to lose thee were to lose myself."

17. MILTON'S GRAND IMAGERY

Vastness is the most characteristic quality of Milton's imagery. Milton's poetical faculties and power of imagination were of such great dimensions that ordinary subjects or ordinary images could not satisfy them. In fact, the whole of the human world, with all its vast and complex character, was too small a subject for his genius. He needed a subject infinitely more vast and complex than the mere human world for the full expression of his powers. Milton was himself fully conscious of the demands of his poetical powers. Dr. Johnson says : "He seems to have been well acquainted with his own genius, and to know what it was that Nature had bestowed upon him more bountifully than upon others ; the power of displaying the vast, illuminating the splendid, enforcing the awful—darkening the gloomy, and aggravating the dreadful : he, therefore, chose a subject on which too much could not be said, on which he might tire his fancy without the censure of extravagance."

Images of Vastness

The theme of *Paradise Lost* is justly in proportion to Milton's poetical powers. "His subject is the fate of world, the revolutions of heaven and of earth ; rebellion against the Supreme King, raised by the highest order of created beings ; the overthrow of their host, and the punishment of their crime ; the creation of a new race of reasonable creatures ; their original happiness and innocence, their forfeiture of immortality, and their restoration to hope and peace. Great events can be hastened or retarded only by persons of elevated dignity. Before the greatness displayed in Milton's poem, all other greatness shrinks away. The weakest of his agents are the highest and noblest of human beings, the original parents of mankind ; with whose actions the elements consented ; on whose rectitude, or deviation of will, depended the state of terrestrial nature, and the condition of all the future inhabitants of the globe."—(Dr. Johnson).

Thus Milton's imagination embraces the whole universe. Having the axis of his faith rested on God and the soul of man, he accepts, without misgiving, the universe as his scene, and his imagination triumphantly expands to fill it. No other English poet has such a God-like vision of the world, a vision revealed in the great pictures of boundless Chaos and warring elements and in constant suggestion of vast distances. He is at his best in imagery suggestive of vast size, limitless space, abysmal depth, and light and darkness. So Addison says : "What can be conceived greater than the battle of angels, the majesty of Messiah, the stature and behaviour of Satan and his peers ? What more beautiful than pandemonium, paradise, heaven, angels, Adam and Eve ? What more strange than the creation of the world, the several metamorphoses of the fallen angels, and the surprising adventures their leader meets with in his search after paradise ? No other subject could have furnished a poet with scenes so proper to strike the imagination, as no other poet could have painted those scenes in more strong and lively colours."

The world of *Paradise Lost* is the supernatural world peopled by God, the angels and the devils. Even the human beings, Adam and Eve, being the inhabitants of Paradise, are more angels than human beings in the common sense of the term. These supernatural beings and their actions better suited Milton's imagery than human beings. In portraying such personages Milton could freely employ all his powers of imagination without being arraigned for extravagance or exaggeration. Milton has purposely portrayed his personages in vague terms so that he could freely indulge in flights of imagination. Had he presented all these spiritual personages in definite form to the eye, the result would have been degrading. We should have the ridiculous instead of the sublime. In his pictures of such a world, Milton did not aim at minute details. He portrayed only the generalities so that he could create the impression of vastness, the sense that everything 'run into infinity' which would have been destroyed if he had laid emphasis on the details of his figures.

This is best illustrated in his portrait of Satan. Milton does not attempt to give any definite idea of his size or measurement ; he only creates an impression of his huge size through a series of apt similes. In the following passage, for example, he is described as lying stretched out huge in length, floating many a rood, equal in size to the earth-born enemies of Jove, or the seamonster which the mariner mistakes for an island :

"Thus Satan talking to his nearest mate,
........................his other parts besides
Prone on the flood, extended long and large,
Lay floating many a rood, in bulk as huge
As whom the fables name of monstrous size,
Titanian or earth-born, that warred on Jove,
........................or that sea-beast
Leviathan, which God of all his works
Created hugest that swim the ocean stream.
Him, haply slumbering on the Norway foam,
The pilot of some small night-foundered staff.
Deeming some island, oft, as seamen tell,
With fixed anchor in his scaly rind,
Moors by his side under the lee, while night
Invests the sea, and wished morn delays,
So stretched huge in length the Arch-fiend lay."

Or again, consider the size of Satan's shield and spear :

"His ponderous shield,
Ethereal temper, massy, large, and round,
Behind him cast. The broad circumference
Hung on his shoulders like the moon, whose orb
Through optic glass the Tuscan artist views
At evening from the top of Fesole,
Or in Valdarno, to descry new lands,
Rivers, or mountains, in her spotty globe.
His spear—to equal which the tallest pine
Hewn on Norwegian hills, to be mast
Of some great admiral, were but a band."

The total impression of all these images is that of huge size, vast proportions and bulk. So Dr. Johnson says, "He had accustomed his imagination to unrestrained indulgence, and his conceptions therefore were extensive. The characteristic quality of his poem is sublimity. He sometimes descends to the elegant, but his element is the great. He can occasionally invest himself with grace ; but his natural part is gigantic loftiness. He can please when pleasure is required ; but it is his peculiar power to astonish."

Idealized Images

Another remarkable trait of Milton's images is that they are vague rather than definite, subjective rather than objective or concrete. This was unavoidable in the essential nature of the theme of *Paradise Lost*. Nothing in definite terms could be said about anything or any phenomenon of Heaven or Hell. He only deals with certain very basic images in the human mind with archetypal patterns of Heaven, Hell, Paradise, God, Devil or the outer space, and seeks to create the same kind of impression or image in the mind of the reader. So while seeming to describe his own imagination he must actually arouse the imagination of the readers so that they can find in their depth the Paradisal light of which all explicit images are only the momentary reflection. C. S. Lewis, describing this characteristic of Milton's imagery and its effects on the reader's imagination, remarks : "We are his organs ; when he appears to be describing Paradise, he is in fact drawing out Paradisal stop in us." This is best illustrated in Milton's description of Paradise in Book IV. Here he does not so much describe the Paradise as the best place or landscape we can idealistically conceive or imagine :

> "And higher than that wall a circling row
> Of goodliest trees, loaden with fairest fruit,
> Blossoms and fruits at once of golden hue,
> Appeared, with gay enamelled colours mixed :
> On which the sun more glad impressed his beams
> Than in fair evening cloud, or humid bow,
> When God hath showered the earth ; so lovely seemed
> That landskip. And of pure now purer air
> Meets his approach, and to the heart inspires
> Vernal delight and joy, able to drive
> All sadness but despair. Now gentle gales,
> Fanning their odoriferous wings, dispense
> Native perfumes, and whisper whence they stole
> Those balmy spoils."

Images of Light and Shade

Milton was also very fond of creating images of light and shade. Since he had gone blind, he had developed a keen longing for images of light. For several years preceding his blindness, while his eyesight had been steadily falling, Milton saw everything in the hazy glimmer of light and shade. This accounts for many images of translucent glimmer given by Milton in the various books of *Paradise Lost*. The most famous of such images is the description of Hell :

> "A dungeon horrible, on all sides round,
> As one great furnace flamed ; yet from those flames
> No light ; but rather darkness visible
> Served only to discover sights of woe,
> Regions of sorrow, doleful shades, where peace
> And rest can never dwell, hope never comes
> That comes to all, but torture without end
> Still urges, and a fiery deluge, fed
> With ever burning sulphur unconsumed."

So is the description of Eden—a place of light, of daylight and starlight, a light of dawn and dusk, the light remembered by Milton in his blindness, having a supernatural glory unexperienced by men of normal vision. Referring to the dimness of Milton's imagery, T. S. Eliot says : "We must, then, in reading *Paradise Lost*, not expect to see clearly ; our sense of sight must be blurred, so that our hearing may become more acute. *Paradise Lost* makes this peculiar demand for readjustment of the reader's mode of apprehension. The emphasis is on the sound, not the vision : upon the word, not the idea ; and in the end it is the unique versification that is the most certain sign of Milton's intellectual mastership."

18. AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL ELEMENT IN 'PARADISE LOST'

Revelation of Milton's Personality

The charm of Milton's poetry lies in the charm of Milton's character and personality. The beauty of Milton's poetry is that he reveals himself consciously or unconsciously in almost every line he wrote. His poetry is the expression of Milton's thoughts on religion, theology, Puritanism, republicanism and liberty. Milton's poetry is, thus, the poet's emotional and spiritual autobiography. *Paradise Lost* reveals Milton's life in almost all its important phases. Strange as it may seem, Satan himself symbolizes Milton's ardent will for liberty and rebellion against tyranny.

Puritan Spirit

Milton, the poet was the Servant of God, and his poetry was an offering on God's altar. With that one 'talent' granted to him by God he wanted 'to serve therewith my Maker.' In 1642 he wrote :

"Poetical powers are the inspired gift of God rarely bestowed in every nation, and are of power, beside the office of a pulpit, to imbreed and cherish in a great people the seeds of virtue and public civility, to allay the perturbation in mind and set the affections in right tune ; to celebrate in glorious and lofty hymns the throne and equipage of God's almightiness, and what he works, and what he suffers to be wrought with Providence in his church ; to sing victorious agonies of martyrs and saints, the deeds and triumphs of just and pious nations, doing valiantly through faith against enemies of Christ; to deplore the general relapses of kingdoms and states from justice and God's true worship."

This is Milton the great Puritan dedicating his poetry to the service of God. This is what he propounds in the opening lines of the First Book of *Paradise Lost* :

"What in me is dark
Illumine, what is low raise and support ;
That to the highth of this great argument
I may assert Eternal Providence,
And justify the ways of God to men."

In his poetry this moral ardour is present from the very beginning, but in *Paradise Lost* it comes to the forefront. It was Milton, the Puritan poet, living in a Puritan environment, who selected the Fall of Man as the theme of his great epic, because in the treatment of the Fall he meant to condemn the mental levity of man, who is prone to forget the importance of his very actions. Adam and Eve feebly commit what they imagine is a trifling error, for their crime. Milton's treatment of the Fall yields the obvious meaning that it is the first business of man to understand the issues of life, and to be aware of the importance of every trivial act. Thus he believed, because not only his nature but the trend of Puritan thought fostered this awareness.

Love of Liberty and Republicanism

Milton the Puritan was also a staunch advocate and supporter of human liberty and republicanism. In the civil war between the Parliament and the King of England, he was a force to be reckoned with on the side of the Parliament. King Charles I symbolized for him tyranny, autocracy, injustice and oppression. He was the enemy of human liberty, equality, fraternity and natural laws of justice. The Parliament stood as the advocate and defender of human rights and liberty. Therefore Milton preached disaffection to the king and advocated and supported the cause of the rebels against the king. In Satan's revolt against God he perceived an individual's revolt against an all-powerful autocrat and tryant. Unwittingly he was driven to sympathize with Satan in his rebellion against God. Therefore the portrait of Satan is enlivened by the poet's own personal feelings and sympathy. Like Satan, Milton himself had been a rebel—not indeed against God—but against the crowned kings of this earth. It is Miton's republicanism that speaks in the republicanism of Satan. It is Milton's own heroism that makes Satan a hero. It would seem that Milton's love of liberty was stronger than even his love of Puritanism. In Satan's speeches this love of liberty expresses itself best :

"What though the field be lost ?
All is not lost : the unconquerable will,
And study of revenge, immortal hate,
And courage never to submit or yield :
And what is else not to be overcome ?
The glory never shall his wrath or might
Extort from me. To bow and sue for grace
With suppliant knee, and deify his power
Who, from the terror of this arm, so late
Doubted his empire—that were low indeed ;
That were an ignominy and shame beneath
This downfall."

It is not Satan speaking—it is Milton speaking, Milton the invincible rebel against tyranny and autocracy.

Autobiographical Touches

There are numerous autobiographical passages in the various Books of *Paradise Lost*. Reference may be made to two major incidents of Milton's life. The first and most pathetic was the occurrence of blindness at a comparatively young age. Milton has referred to his blindness in several of his poetical works, but the most touching reference to this great malady comes in the Third Book of *Paradise Lost*. Praying to Heavenly Light the poet writes the following deeply touching lines :

> "Thee I revisit safe,
> And feel thy sovran vital lamp : but thou
> Revisit'st not these eyes, that roll in vain
> To find thy piercing ray, and find no dawn ;
> So thick a drop serene hath quenched their orbs,
> Or dim suffusion veiled."

He continues to lament the loss of eyesight in the following moving words :

> "Thus with the year
> Seasons return ; but not to me returns
> Day, or the sweet approach of eve or morn
> Or sight of vernal bloom, or summer's rose,
> Or flocks or herds, or human face divine ;
> But cloud instead and ever-during dark
> Surrounds me, from the cheerful ways of men
> Cut off, and, for the book of knowledge fair,
> Presented with a universal blank
> Of Nature's works, to me expunged and rased,
> And wisdom at one entrance quite shut out.
> So much the rather thou, Celestial Light,
> Shine inward, and the mind through all her powers
> Irradiate ; there plant eyes ; all mist from thence
> Purge and disperse, that I may see and tell
> Of things invisible to mortal sight."

Another great episode of his life to which he refers in Book III of *Paradise Lost* was the peril of life in which he had fallen after the Restoration :

> "Though fallen on evil days,
> On evil days though fallen, and evil tongues,
> In darkness, and which dangers compass'd round,
> And solitude ; yet not alone, while thou
> Visit'st my slumbers nightly, or when morn
> Purples the east : still govern thou my song,
> Urania, and fit audience find, though few."

These are, beside, many other references and allusions to his personal life in different Books of *Paradise Lost*.

Thus, we cannot separate Milton the poet from Milton the man. The impact of his colossal personality is clearly left upon his works. On this point Tillyard says :

"You cannot ignore him any more than you can ignore Alexander the Great, or Cromwell, or Napoleon. He is too extraordinary a person to shut out from our notice ; and he is perhaps the only man of this type who has translated this mental urge into literature and not into action. His was no uncontrolled lust for mere conquest. Rather he typified the controlled energies of the great explorers and inventors. He stands thus as the perpetual monument of the pioneering spirit in man, a spirit which may have destroyed much as well as created, have caused misery as well as happiness, but to which human civilization is largely indebted and which we cannot condemn unless we condemn civilization itself."

19. THE PRINCIPLE OF FREE WILL AND DIVINE JUSTICE

While writing the *Paradise Lost*, Milton declared that his professed aim would be "to justify the ways of God to men". Some critics are of the opinion that Milton has unconsciously sided with Satan and has been unjust to Adam. But a rational study of the poem reveals that Milton has achieved his aim by asserting the principles of Free Will and Divine Justice. In *Paradise Lost*, Book III, Milton discusses the principles of Free Will and Divine Justice. In a long dialogue between God and the Son of God, the Almighty himself explains these intricate theories governing the destiny of man and ethereal powers.

God being omnipotent and omniscient knows the past, present and future of everything and every being that exists in heaven, earth or hell or any of the innumerable planets and stars. He has the foreknowledge of everything that happens anywhere in the limitless cosmos. Nothing can happen anywhere without the foreknowledge and permission of God. God had the foreknowledge of the angels' rebellion against His authority under the leadership of Satan. He also knew beforehand of Satan's success in seducing Adam and Eve and of their commission of sin against God's explicit ordinance. He could certainly have prevented these things from happening, if he had only willed so.

Therefore the Son of God asks God himself why he allowed these things to happen at all. In reply to this God explains to the Son the principles of Free Will and Divine Justice.

God created human beings and all ethereal Powers "just and right." He also gave them conscience to judge and distinguish for themselves right from wrong, and good from evil. Good and evil exist together in the universe. It is for man, under the dictates of his conscience, to shun evil and follow the path of good. Within these limits and under these conditions man is free to stand by God and act according to Divine principles or go against them. Conscience, Will and Reason have been given to man to choose his own path of action. Therefore man cannot blame any external power for his actions or for his sufferings in consequence of his own actions. If God had not made human beings and ethereal Powers free to act according to their conscience, how could he distinguish between the true and false, the constant and the inconstant. So God says :

> "I made him just and right,
> Sufficient to have stood, though free to fall.
> Such I created all the Ethereal Powers
> And Spirits, both them who stood and them who failed ;
> Freely they stood, and fell who fell.
> Not free, what proof could they have given sincere

Of true allegiance, constant faith, or love,
Where only what they need must do appear,
Not what they would ?"

In the absence of Free Will they 'had served Necessity, not Me'. Therefore they are "authors to themselves in all." Neither Divine Will nor Predestination overrules them.

Then comes the question of Divine Justice. Since all human or ethereal beings are free to act according to their own conscience, the virtuous must be rewarded and the evil punished. God rewards or punishes strictly according to the Divine Principles of Justice. Satan and his followers rebelled against God and therefore they were expelled from Heaven and eternally condemned to Hell. Since they acted 'self-tempted and self-depraved', they forfeited any chance of redemption or restoration to Divine Grace. Man also sinned, but he did so under temptation given to him by Satan. This mitigated the intensity of his sin. Therefore, though expelled from Heaven, a new world was created for him and a provision was made that if anyone undertook to pay the penalty for him, death for death, man would be redeemed and restored to Grace. God thus ordained :

"Man disobeying,
Disloyal, breaks his fealty, and sins
Against the high supremacy of Heaven,
Affecting Godhead, and, so losing all,
To expiate his treason hath naught left,
But, to destruction sacred and devote
He with his whole posterity must die ;—
Die he or Justice must ; unless for him
Some other, able, and as willing, pay
The rigid satisfaction, death for death."

Whereupon the Son of God offers himself saying :

"Behold me, then : me for him, life for life,
I offer ; on me let thine anger fall ;
Account me Man : I for his sake will leave
Thy bosom, and this glory next to thee
Freely put off, and for him lastly die
Well pleased."

The Father accepts this offer and promises man's redemption. This satisfies the canons of Divine Justice.

20. CHARACTER OF SATAN

Satan is the best drawn of Miltion's characters. Addison calls him "the most exalted and most depraved being" in *Paradise Lost*. He is a fallen Archangel who retains his grandeur and magnificence, his intellectual vigour and emotional intensity even in his fall. His fall and depravity are of such an exalted order that even his adversaries admire him. He is evil incarnate, but Evil so great and magnificent that far from hating him, still less deriding him, we marvel at him ; we praise and admire him. He is great in his fall, strong in his weakness, honourable in his dishonour, bold and indomitable in his misadventure, vanquished but refusing to admit his defeat. *Paradise Lost* will lose much of its vigour and vitality, its grandeur and magnificence without Satan. So Lascelles Abercrombie says: "It is surely the simple fact that *Paradise Lost* exists only for one figure, that is, Satan just as the *Iliad* exists for Achilles, and the *Odyssey* for Odysseus. It is in the figure of Satan that the imperishable significance of *Paradise Lost* is centred, his vast unyielding agony symbolizes the profound antimony of modern consciousness."

A Great Power

The key of Satan's character is strength and courage. He possesses an indomitable spirit, a courage not to be cowed down even by the Almighty himself.

He is the greatest power that has been overthrown, yet retaining strongest will to resist or to endure. He is baffled, not confounded. He stands like a tower,

> " ......As when Heaven's fire
> Hath scathed the forest oaks or mountain pines."

He is still surrounded with the hosts of rebel angels, armed warriors who regard him as their sovereign leader, and with whose fate he sympathizes as he views them all around, as far as the eye can reach; though he keeps aloof from them in his own mind, and holds supreme counsel only with his own heart and mind. Though he is an outcast from Heaven, Hell trembles beneath his feet, Sin and Death are at his heels, and mankind is his easy prey. Self-exaltation is the motive of all Satan's conduct. Even in defeat he never thinks of submission:

> "What though the field be lost?
> And is not lost: the uuconquerable will,
> And study of revenge, immortal hate,
> And courage never to submit or yield:
> And what is else not to overcome."

—(*Paradise Lost*, I, 105-109)

The fierceness of the punishment inflicted on him is mitigated by the greater fierceness of his pride; the loss of infinite happiness to himself is compensated in thought, by the power of inflicting infinite misery on others. The pursuit of evil to him is logical necessity in action:

> "Fallen Cherub, to be weak is miserable,
> Doing or suffering: but of this be sure,
> To do aught good never will be our task
> But ever to do ill our sole delight,
> As being the contrary to his high will
> Whom we resist."

—(*Paradise Lost*, I, 157-162)

And every other feeling is to be crushed into subjection to this dominant aim;

"Farewell, remorse. All good to me is lost :
Evil, be thou my God ; by thee at least
Divided empire with Heaven's King I hold."
—(*Paradise Lost*, II, 109-111)

He sincerely believes even after his fall that he has strength and following enough to challenge the Almighty :

"And now his heart
Distends with pride, and hardening in his strength
Glories ; for never since created Man,
Met such embodied force."
—(*Paradise Lost*, I, 571-574).

His Sense of Injured Merit

Tillyard says that "the key to Satan are the high disdain and sense of injured merit to which he himself admits in the First Book of the poem." C. S. Lewis holds a similar view. He says that Satan thought himself "impaired". He thought so because Messiah had been pronounced Head of the Angels. This unjust and ill-founded sense of "wrong" done to him made him rise in arms against the Almighty. In this respect Satan stood self-abused. A being superior to him in kind, by whom he himself had been created—a being far above him in the natural hierarchy—had been preferred to him in honour by an authority whose right to do so was not disputable. No one had in fact done anything to Satan ; he was not hungry, nor overtasked, nor removed from his place, nor shunned, nor hated—he only thought himself impaired. In the midst of a world of light and love, of song and feast and dance, he could find nothing to think of more interesting than his own prestige. And his prestige, it must be noted, had and could have no other grounds than those which he refused to admit for the superior prestige of Messiah. This becomes a kind of psychological and emotional obsession with him, and he suffers and falls on account of this. Abdiel draws the attention of Satan to this mistaken sense of prestige and freedom before the latter is cast into Hell :

"Apostat, still thou err'st, nor end wilt find
Of erring, from the path of truth remote :
Unjustly though deprav'st it with the name
Of servitude to serve whom God ordains
Of Nature ; God and Nature had the same,
When he who rules is worthiest, and excels
Than whom he governs. This is servitude,
To serve th' unwise, or him who hath rebell'd
Against his worthier, as thine now serve thee."
—(*Paradise Lost*, II, 172-180)

His Majestic Pride

Satan is haughty, vain and proud to the highest degree. He testifies to the saying that even ills and demerits strung to the highest degree become admirable and lovable. All his actions and words are tuned to the same key. He cannot forget even for once that before his fall he belonged to the highest order in the hierarchy of angels. When Zephon discovers him sitting in the shape of a toad by the side of Eve, and asks him who he is, he proudly says :

"Know ye not then ?
Know ye not me ? Ye knew me once no mate
For you, there sitting where ye durst not soar
Not to know me argues yourselves unknown,
The lowest of your throng."

Not only the figure of Satan, but his speeches in council, his soliloquies, his addresses to Eve, his share in war in Heaven or in the Fall of Man, show the same decided superiority of his character. In the very first speech he makes, he shows himself as the master of the situation :

"Farewell, happy fields,
Where joy for ever dwells ! Hail horrors ! hail,
Infernal world ! and thou, profoundest Hell,
Receive thy new possessor, one who brings
A mind not to be chang'd by place or time.
The mind is its own place, and in itself
Can make a Heaven of Hell, a Hell of Heaven.
…………………………………………………
Here we may reign secure, and in my choice
To reign is worth ambition, though in Hell :
Better to reign in Hell, than serve in Heaven."
—(*Paradise Lost*, I, 249-263).

The odds are against him, but still he struggles and wins our profoundest sympathy and admiration. In fact, Satan shows a noble and virtuous energy in rousing himself from the fiery lake and inspiring his fellows with his own desire for action against God and the newly-created world of men. Moreover, his perception of the superiority of good, and of the hopelessness of his struggle, while at the same time he is steadfast in his resolution "never to submit", shows a definite sublimity in his character. Thus, in the grand passage where he is imagined gazing on the happiness of Adam and Eve, he says to himself :

"Sight hateful, sight tormenting. Thus these two
Imparadised in one another's arms,
The happier Eden, shall enjoy their fill
Of bliss on bliss ; while I to Hell am thrust,
Where neither joy nor love, but fierce desire,
Among our other torments not the least,
Still unfulfilled, with pain of longing pines ;
Yet let me not forget what I have gained
From their own mouths."
—(*Paradise Lost*, IV, 502-513)

And when he is confronted by the Cherub Zephon :

> "Abashed the Devil stood,
> And felt how awful goodness is, and saw
> Virtue in her shape how lovely—saw, and pines
> His loss ; but chiefly to find here observed
> His lustre visibly impaired ; yet seemed
> Undaunted."
> —(*Paradise Lost*, IV, 846-851)

His Vaulting Passion

Satan does not only represent pride, selfishness and wickedness, he is Passion in general. He, is, in particular, sensuality. A sensual passion unites him to his daughter Sin, and their common ideal is to reach, as she says :

> "To that new world of light and bliss, among
> The gods who live at ease, where I shall reign
> At thy right hand voluptuous, as beseems
> Thy daughter and thy darling, without end."
> —(*Paradise Lost*, II, 867-870)

Envy, hate and anger and all harder passions govern his conduct :

> "O thou that with surpassing glory crown'd
> Look'st from thy sole dominion like the God
> Of this new world, at whose sight all the stars
> Hide their diminish'd heads, to thee I call
> But with no friendly voice, and add thy name,
> O sun, to tell thee how I hate thy beams,
> That bring to my remembrance from that state
> I fell, how glorious once above thy sphere."
> —(*Paradise Lost*, IV, 32-39)

And,

> "Thus while he spoke, each passion dimm'd his face,
> Thrice changed with pale ire, envy, despair."
> —(*Paradise Lost*, IV, 114-115)

An Embodiment of Evil

Satan has been represented by Milton as an embodiment of Evil. In spite of various appreciable traits like ambition, courage and steadfast will in the character of Satan, Milton traces gradual deterioration of Satan's character. Satan makes evil his chief motive in life :

> "To do aught good never will be our task,
> But ever to do ill our sole delyht,
> As being contrary to this high will
> Whom we resist."

"Study of revenge" becomes the sole purpose of his life. Since he cannot wage open war with God, he seeks to undo and reverse the good that God wills by indirect means. He does not feel repentant for his foul revolt. His pride forbids repentance. He knows that he cannot long remain submissive if he repents and submits to God. Therefore, he embraces Evil :

"So farewell hope, and, with hope, farewell fear,
Farewell remorse ; all good to me is lost ;
Evil, be thou my good ; by thee at least
Divided empire with Heaven's king I hold."

Milton's Identification

Some critics have charged Milton of identifying himself unconsciously with Satan. Blake said that "Milton was of the Devil's party without knowing it." It is alleged that in Satan's pride and rebellious temperament Milton found his own mind and spirit. Other critics have suggested that in Satan Milton has unconsciously created the very figure of Puritanism, and thus he identified the cause, to which he had devoted the best years of his life, with the Devil. There is no doubt that Satan is a part of Milton's own heroic energy, most powerfully shown. The traditional motive of Satan's fall was pride, which was also the ruling passion in Milton's own soul. So while he was describing Satan's pride, his imagination was fired and consequently the character of Satan is drawn with a power unique in literature. In fact, Milton pours out his own feelings and, therefore, the character of Satan, as he presents it, cannot but inspire feelings of sympathy and admiration. Satan's first speeches are pure Miltonic lyricism, because Milton's pride had also known defeat as Satan's had. What matters failure and the triumph of the enemy if one is resolved not to submit ? Here we have the rage and defiance which Milton himself felt when he saw the Restoration :

"Since, through experience of this great event,
In arms not worse, in foresight much advanced.
We may with more successful hope resolve,
To wage by force or guile eternal war,
Irreconcilable to our grand foe,
Who now triumphs, and in the excess of joy
Sole reigning holds the tyranny of heaven."

—(*Paradise Lost*, I, 118-124)

Milton must have felt about the reign of Charles II, as Satan felt about the reign of Belial in Heaven :

"In courts and palaces he also reigns,
And in luxurious cities, where the noise,
Of riot ascends above their loftiest towers,
And injury and outrage ; and when night
Darkens the streets, then wander forth the sons of
Belial, flown wito isolence and wine."

—(*Paradise Lost*, I, 497-502)

Milton must have thought of the condition of his fellow Puritans at the Restoration somewhat in the same strain as Satan did seeing his compeers in the dark pit of Hell :

"Is this the region, this the soil, the clime,
....................'this the seat
That we must change for Heaven ? this mournful gloom

For that celestial light ? Be it so, since he
Who now is sovran can dispose and bid
What shall be right ; farthest from him is best,
Whom reason hath equall'd, force hath made supreme
Above his equals."

—(*Paradise Lost*, I, 242-249)

There is also no lack of sympathy on intellectual matters between Satan and Milton. Satan is naturally a heretic, and he finds fault in 'the ways of God'. His peculiar position gives him a liberty of mind akin to Milton's. In those passages, where Satan affirms that everything has been produced by the earth, his material looks very much like Milton's who also believed that all beings were produced by matter :

"Who saw
When this creation was ? Remember'st thou
Thy making, while the Maker gave thee being ?
We know no time when we were not as now :
Know none before us, self-begot, self-rais'd
By our own quickening power, when fatal course
Had circled his full orb, the birth mature
Or this our native Heav'n : Ethereal Sons."

—(*Paradise Lost*, V, 856-863)

And,

"The gods are first, and that advantage use
On our belief, that all from them proceeds :
I question it, for this fair earth I see,
Warmed by the sun, producing every kind,
Them nothing."

—(*Paradise Lost*, IX, 718-722)

And Satan is expressing Milton's opinions about the insufficiency of dogma when taken literally, when he like a modern rationalist sees the disproportion between the eating of an apple and all the ensuing punishments :

"Him by fraud I have seduced,
From his Creator, and the more to increase
Your wonder, with an apple. He thereat
Offended (worthy your laughter) hath given up
Both his beloved Man and all his world,
To sin and Death a prey, and so to us,
Without our hazard, labour, or alarm.
To range in, and to dwell, and over Man
To rule as over all he should have ruled."

—(*Paradise Lost*, X, 485-493)

This was Milton's own attitude towards the contemporary penal laws under which the Puritans were harshly punished, tormented, or even executed after the Restoration.

It is clear that Satan is not only a part of Milton's character, he is also a part of Milton's mind. This is the reason that Satan is

Milton's greatest creation, and the opening books where he is the chief figure far surpass in interest all that follows. There is nothing greater in poetry than these tremendous scenes. Satan and Beelzebub in converse in Hell while the fallen angels lie scattered around; Satan rallying his host, when comes perhaps the most sublime stroke in the poem :

> "He now prepar'd
> To speak : there at their doubl'd Ranks they bend
> From wing to wing and half enclose him round
> With all his peers ; attention held them mute ;
> Thrice he essay'd and thrice in spite of scorn
> Tears such as Angels weep burst forth ; at last
> Words interwove with sighs found out this way."
> —(*Paradise Lost*, II, 615-621)

Wherever Satan appears, he soars above every rival, and yet it is equally certain and obvious that neither consciously nor unconsciously does Milton identify himself with Satan. He definitely does not agree with Satan, and is not of his party. He has never put into Satan's mouth any speech of self-justification. When he speaks before others, his pleas are obviously sophistical and when he speaks to himself, he acknowledges the justice of his lot :

> "Nay curs'd be thou ; since against his thy will
> Chose freely what it now so justly rues.
> Me miserable, which way shall I fly
> Infinite wrath and infinite despair ?
> Which way I fly is Hell ; itself am Hell ;
> And in the low'st deep a lower deep
> Still threat'ning to devour me opens wide
> To which the Hell I suffer seems a heav'n."
> —(*Paradise Lost*, IV, 71-76)

Here Milton is obviously far from sympathizing with Satan. In fact he arraigns him also whenever the occasion so demands. He does not let him forget that he is himself responsible for his fall and consequent expulsion from Heaven.

A Grand Tragic Figure

Thus Satan is one of the most tragic figures, and withal one of the most sublime figures in world literature. He is a fallen Archangel, the Fiend or the Devil, yet we are moved to human sympathy with him. Milton has imparted to his devils human sentiments and feelings. Tillyard says : "Milton could hardly do other than he did in making Satan a tragic and hence a mainly human figure and in giving his followers very human characteristics. His Hell, unlike Dante's had no human inhabitants. To make it interesting Milton was forced in compensation to humanize his devils rather than to make them represent essential evil." On the other extreme, Satan seeks to affect the Divine pattern of Trinity. Satan, Sin, and Death are a close parody of the Divine Trinity. Satan corresponds to the

Father. He begets a daughter Sin, and proceeding, from them both there is the third member of the infernal Trinity, Death.

21. IS SATAN THE HERO OF THE EPIC

In Satan we find, in a way, a self-portrayal of Milton. The characteristics of Milton are the characteristics of Satan. Milton was a rebel like Satan. He fought against the tyranny of King Charles I and the Cavaliers. As Oliver Cromwell's Latin Secretary, he worked hard and heroically, and even lost his vision. He had a high sense of pride, individuality and egotism, which are clearly manifest in the character of Satan "He has often been said to be the hero of *Paradise Lost*. It is enough to say, in answer, that his history in that book is that of a person in process of degrading change. Adam is the true hero of the Epic ; and with him Eve is purified at the end. That which they have lost they again gained in another form—"a Paradise within thee, happier far ever." Over again, this purification is set against the degradation of Satan ; and his real fall is all the greater for his apparent victory." —(*Stopford A. Brooke*)

Dryden once regretted that a depraved character like Satan should be the hero of an Epic. Satan had the audacity to rebel against God. Round him veered thousands of angels. He failed and yet he had an unconquerable will. He exclaimed,

> "To be weak is miserable
> Doing or suffering."

This indomitable will certainly commands our respect and admiration. Milton, as Saurat says, "had Satan in him." Till the Fourth Book of *Paradise Lost*, Satan was allowed to grow disproportionately large. Blake says : "Milton wrote in fetters when he wrote of angels and God, and at liberty when of Devils and Hell, this is because he was a true poet and of the Devils's party without knowing it." Blake is only partially correct. Saurat is right when he says that Milton had Satan in him, but he wanted to drive him out. "He had fell passion, pride and sensuality. The pleasure he takes in the creation of Satan is the joy of liberating, purging himself of the evil in himself, by concentrating it outside himself into a work of art."

But critics do not agree with this view. In spite of the fact that Satan dominates the first few books, he appears as a degrading character. In the words of Wyatt and Low, "One supposed defect in the story of *Paradise Lost* has been frequently dwelt on, and that is that Satan, and not Adam, is the hero of the epic. We think that only those whose reading of Milton has been confined to the first two books can be misled by this nonsensical paradox. In the first two books, Satan is naturally made a heroic figure ; he is still an Archangel, though fallen, one of the chief Archangels, and king over his fellows. His character, his power, his capacity for evil must be exalted in order to show the epic greatness of the coming conflict, in order to rouse the reader's fears for himself, human sympathy with his first parents and gratitude for his redemption. But we have not to wait for *Paradise Regained* to see the steady deterioration in Satan's character. Surely, to take one instance alone, there is little of the heroic in Satan when he takes the form of a toad to whisper in Eve's ear, and is stirred up by the spear of Ithuriel. At the close of the poem, Satan's degradation is complete."

Satan, despite his majestic and impressive figure, is not the hero of *Paradise Lost*. He towers head and shoulders over the other characters only in the first two Books. There is gradual degeneration in his character in the Third Book. He becomes an ugly toad, a serpent, and his degeneration is complete.

Some critics, therefore, are of the opinion that *Paradise Lost* is an epic without a hero. Even Adam's claims are not strong enough. He is too inert and passive. He does not act, but is acted upon.

This view, plausible as it is, cannot be accepted. Adam is the hero of *Paradise Lost*. Though not as colourful a personality as Satan, Adam is the pivotal character of the epic, the principal object of which is to justify the ways of God to Adam. Adam is not inert and passive. He acts, and it is his action that brings about the loss of paradise. He has not been credited with heroic exploits. Compared with Achilles or Hector, he presents a rather poor show. But his heroism and greatness consist in his suffering and repentance.

●

22. MILTON'S SIMILES

One of Milton's most characteristic literary devices is his use of similes. Following the epic tradition, Milton frequently makes use of short and long similes to produce a number of effects severally or collectively. The theme he chose for his *Paradise Lost* was superhuman and supersensuous which no human mind could directly conceive or comprehend. Therefore Milton was obliged to make his images and sentiments tangible and comprehensible to the reader by making a judicious use of similes both positively and negatively. The action of *Paradise Lost* up to the Fall is the inhuman one of a few days in hell, heaven, and a small, innocent spot of earth ; and the Fall does not increase the number of actors. Yet by means of similes Milton has put into the mouths of this tiny group of persons all the history of the world and all its geography, art, science and learning, the Jew, the Christian and the Pagan, Greek philosophy and Roman politics, classical myth and medieval romance. These similes give out Milton's astonishing store of learning, and the still more astonishing range and flight of imagination.

Similes Drawn from Classical Learning

Milton found an inexhaustible store of learning and experience in classical literature and mythology, from which he drew material for his similes.

Thus he tells us that the palace of Hell is something far beyond the magnificence of "Babylone, or great Alcairo", and the army of rebel angels far exceeds those,

> "That fought at Thebes and Ilium, on each side
> Mixed with auxiliar gods ; and what resounds
> In fable or romance of Uther's son,
> Begirt with British and Armoric Knights ;
> And all who since, baptized or infidel ;
> Jousted in Aspramount or Montalban,
> Damasco, or Morocco, or Trebisond,
> When Charlemain with all his peerage fell
> By Fontarabia."

When Milton compares the dwarfed rebels of Hell to the "faery elves" on their mirth and dance intent, and engaged in "Midnight revels", he returns to the tales and fancies of the Middle Ages. In his description of the beauty of Paradise, which is too great to be directly told, Milton uses negative similes drawn from this classical learning and mythology :

> "Not that fair field
> Of Enna, where Proserpine gathering flowers,
> Herself a fairer flower, by gloomy Dis
> Was gathered, which cost Ceres all that pain
> To seek her through the world ; nor that sweet grove
> Of Daphne by Orontes, and the inspired
> Castalian spring, might with this Paradise
> Of Eden strive."

Sometimes with the help of these similes, Milton gives rest to his imagination exhausted by the sublimity of heaven and hell, bringing it home to its own familiar earth, and to scenes whose charm lies not in their strangeness and remoteness, but in their association with the old habits, experiences and memories which they recall. So after the strain of the great debate with which the Second Book opens, Milton soothes us with the simile of the evening after storm :

> "Thus they their doubtful consultations dark
> Ended, rejoicing in their matchless Chief ;
> As, when from mountain-tops the dusky clouds
> Ascending, while the north wind sleeps, o'erspread
> Heaven's cheerful face the louring elements
> Scowl o'er the darkened landskip snow or shower,
> If chance the radiant sun, with farewell sweet,
> Extend his evening beam, the fields revive,
> The birds their notes renew, and bleating herds,
> Attest their joy, that hill and valley rings."

By means of the simile of the evening with the end of consultation of the fiends, Milton has used the classical method of appeal to universal knowledge and feeling, and not the romantic method of strangeness of sentiment and detailed particularity of truth. In this way Milton makes his call on the thoughts and emotions, not of eccentric or exceptional individuals, but of men and women of all times and nations.

Similes drawn from Contemporary Life

Milton also drew highly effective and suggestive similes from contemporary social and political life. Such similes were naturally more easily comprehensible to his readers than those drawn from classical sources. When Satan leaps over the walls of Paradise, the simile begins thus :

> "As when a prowling wolf,
> Whom hunger drives to seek new haunt for prey,
> It hurdled cotes amid the field-secure,
> Leaps o'er the fence with ease into the fold :
> Or as a thief bent to unhoard the cash
> Of some richer burger, whose substantial door,
> Cross-barred and bolted fast, fear no assault,
> In at the window climbs or o'er the tiles :
> So clomb this first grand thief into God's fold
> So since into his Church lewd hirelings climb."

Here in these similes of Satan with the wolf and the thief, Milton brings to our mind the shepherd's fear of the wolf, and the poor London citizen's feat of the thief.

Epic Similes

But the most characteristic Miltonic simile is the epic simile. It is maintained by certain critics that Milton was the inventor of such epic similes. These epic similes have the quality of superhuman permanence and vastness about them. They create an unmistakable impression of greatness and sublimity. In fact, the epic simile is one of the most important sources of grandeur and sublimity in Milton's, poetry. 'Milton draws these long epic similes from classical mythology natural sciences and the vast and incomprehensible forces and phenomena of Nature. He imparts dignity and distance to his narratives and descriptions by choosing comparison from ancient history and mythology, or from those great and strange things in Nature which repel intimacy, the sun, the moon, the sea, planets in opposition, a shooting star, an evening mist, a will o' the wisp, a vulture descending from the Himalayas, the madness of Alcides in Oeta, the rape of Proserpine and a hundred more reminiscences of the ancient world. He does not confine himself within the limits of rigorous comparison. His great excellence is amplitude, and he expands the casual image beyond the dimension which the occasion required. Thus, comparing the shield of Satan to the orb of the Moon, he crowds the imagination with the discovery of the telescope, and all the wonders which the telescope discovered at the time :

> "His ponderous shield,
> Ethereal temper, massy, large, and round,
> Behind him cast. The broad circumference
> Hung on his shoulders like the moon, whose orb

> Through optic glass the Tuscan artist views
> At evening from the top of Fesole.
> Or in Valdarno, to descry new lands,
> Rivers, or mountains, in her spotty globe."

Another of Milton's favourite devices is to draw comparisons from the distant and unfamiliar phenomena of Nature. Here is a vast image of Satan alighting and walking on the 'dark, waste, and wild' globe under 'the frown of night':

> "As when a vulture, on Imaus bred,
> Where snowy ridge the roving Tartar bounds.
> Dislodging from a region scarce of prey,
> To gorge the flesh of lambs or yeanling kids,
> On hills where flocks are fed, flies towards the springs
> Of Ganges or Hydaspes, Indian streams,
> But in his way lights on the barren plains
> Of Sericana where Chinese drive
> With sails and wind their cany waggons light;
> So, on this windy sea of land, the Fiend
> Walked up and down alone, bent on his prey."

Such long-drawn similes tend to detract the mind from the context and takes the reader's imagination to visions and impressions quite different from those that occasioned them. The reader has to retrace his lines and recapitulate the thread of the story. Nevertheless, the total effect of his epic or Homeric similes is that of grandeur or massiveness.

Milton's huge epic similes reach both backwards and forwards embracing in their span all history and space. When Eve is compared to Proserpine, we know that she will be gathered by Satan as Proserpine was gathered by Dis. When she is compared to Ceres, the implication is that she will reduce Adam from God's image to "the inglorious likeness of a beast". Again, when she is compared to Pandora, we are compelled to think of Pandora's triviality and the sufferings which her trivial action lets loose. "His figures may be called historic parallels, whereby the names and incidents of human history are made to elucidate and ennoble the less familiar names and incidents of his prehistoric theme."

23. MILTON'S GRAND STYLE

Milton, according to Matthew Arnold, is the supreme master of the Grand Style. Defining the term Grand Style Arnold says that "the Grand Style is the style that arises in poetry when a noble nature, poetically gifted, treats with simplicity or with severity a serious subject." The Grand Style is, therefore, a harmonious blending of two elements—sublime thought and sublime expression. That which interprets life to us, which edifies, elevates, consoles and sustains us is sublime in thought. And that which expresses this sublime thought with felicity, force, rapidity and plainness is sublime in expression. Rapidity, plainness and directness of diction syntax, and plainness and nobility of thought are the essential attributes of the Grand Style. Saintsbury gives a slightly wider definition of the Grand Style than Arnold's. According to him it includes "the perfection of expression in every direction and kind, the commonly called great and the commonly called small, the tragic and the comic, the serious, the ironic, and even to some extent the trivial (not in the worst sense, of course)." Therefore Saintsbury says : "Whenever this perfection of expression acquires such force that it transmutes the subject and transports the hearer or reader, then and there the Grand Style exists, for so long, and in such a degree, as the transmutation of the one and the transportation of the other lasts. It may persist, or cease or disappear and reappear, like a fixed or a revolving light, but there it is in *essentia* or *potentia*."

In Milton the Grand Style exists constantly both in *essentia* and in *potentia* in all his great potential works, specially in the *Paradise Lost*. In no other poet in the English language, not even in Shakespeare, do we find the Grand Style constantly present. Milton produces the Grand Style through certain well-marked linguistic and artistic devices which Hollingworth and Watt analyse as follows :

(*a*) *Allusions*. One method by which he conveys much in few words is the method of allusion : Milton continually uses words and phrases which recall to the learned reader passages in Homer, Virgil, Horace, Dante, Spenser, and other great writers. These allusions bring to the mind a whole series of associated ideas ; thus the reference to Satan's first sight of "this pendent World" in Book II line 1052 recalls Shakespeare's—

"To be imprisoned in the viewless winds
And blown with restless violence round about
The pendent world."

But this is a description of the misery which Claudio in *Measure for Measure* expects to follow death ; it is eminently appropriate to the state of the spirit accused for ever.

(*b*) *Compressed Constructions*. Another way in which Milton crowds his verse with meaning is by using Latin and Greek constructions. Both these languages were highly inflected ; that is, the ending of the word was enough to show its function, so that many an unimportant word, for instance the verb to be, could be omitted, the case-ending of the preceding or following word sufficiently showing that it must be supplied. English is not to any appreciable extent an inflected tongue, and the adoption of such constructions, though it makes for brevity, makes also for obscurity.

Thus Milton will use in (II. 33) "none whose portion is so small" for "there is none whose", etc. ; "who can advise may speak" (II. 42) for "he who can", etc. "thus repulsed" (II. 142) for "if we are thus repulsed", "retreated in a silent valley" (II. 547) for "who are in retreat in", etc. ; "his high will whom we resist" for "the high will of him whom we resist."

Word Compression. Just as Milton uses Latin construction so he also often uses Latin-derived words in the sense they bear in Latin. We get, for instance, virtue for "bravery, manliness" : "puny" (II. 367) with a reference to its original sense of "born later" as well as its more modern force. This last device of fitting two meanings to one word serves to knit up his style still more closely.

But brevity often full of epigrammatic contrast as in "by merit raised to that bad eminence", and "rather than be less cared not to be at all", is by no means the only characteristic of Milton's style. Scarcely less striking is his command of expressive and resounding words. We have not only such echoes of the sense as—

> "Such murmur filled,
> The assembly, as when hollow rocks retain
> The sound of blustering winds which all night long
> Had roused the sea :"

We have the skilful mingling of the nobility given by many syllabled words and the directness and force given by everyday phrases—

> "Excite,
> Fallacious hope, or arm th' obdured breast
> With stubborn phrases.
> Thus repulsed ; our final hope
> Is flat despair."

So, too, Milton is a master of magniloquent proper nouns which call up gorgeous visions of the ancient and the remote.

(*c*) *Similes*. Nor does Milton despise the ornaments of verse: he uses similes in the Virgilian manner as miniatures inset in his verse to add beauty rather than to illuminate the meaning. So we have the following beautiful Homeric simile in Book III, lines 431-450 :

> "As when a vulture, on Imaus bred.
> Whose showy ridge the roving Tartar bounds,
> Dislodging from a region scarce of prey,
> To gorge the flesh of lambs or yeanling kids
> On hills where flocks are fed, flies towards the springs
> Of Ganges or Hydaspes, Indian streams,
> But in his way lights on the barren plains
> Of Sericana, where Chinese drive
> With sails and wind their cany waggons light ;
> So, on this windy sea of land, the Fiend
> Walked up and down alone, bent on his prey ;
> Alone, for other creature in this place,
> Living or lifeless, to be found was none,
> None yet ; but store hereafter from the Earth
> Up hither like aerial vapours flew
> Of all things transitory and vain, when sin
> With vanity had filled the works of men—
> Both all things vain, and all who in vain things

Built their fond hopes of glory or lasting fame,
Or happiness in this or the other life."

(*d*) *Other Devices*. Milton was indeed a past-master of all the methods by which the poet adds beauty, variety, and interest to his work. We get repetition :

"With ruin upon ruin, rout on rout,
Confusion worse confounded ;"

a balanced arrangement of adjectives before and after the noun which they qualify, *e. g.* –

"The scourage
Inexorable, and the torturing hour."

An effect of climax is obtained from the successive use of similar words :

"Unrespited, unpitied, unregrieved"

the use of rhetorical questions, of vivid concrete detail--*grinned horrible a ghostly smile*—and onomatopoetic alliteration—

"Fierce as ten Furies ....
Shook a dreadful dart."

But perhaps the greatest of all the characteristics of Milton in his unequalled command of blank verse.

(*e*) *Musical Verse*. Milton's organ-mouthed music equally contributes to his grandeur. His blank verse is the most sublime and the most musical in the English language. There is a beautiful harmony between sense and sound in his verse. He manipulates his metre and introduces such catching varieties in the stresses and pauses of his blank verse lines that the effect produced is permanent. He united all the artifices employed by his prodecessors like Marlowe and Shakespeare, and carried them to artistic and architectonic perfection. The long periods of Milton's poetry communicate a peculiar feeling, almost a physical sensation of a breathless leap into an ocean of music. Further in order to avoid monotony, the continually varies the stresses in the line, the number, their width, and their incidence letting them fall, when it pleases his ear, on odd as well as on the even syllables of the line. Do Quincey speaks of the "slow planetary wheelings" of Milton's verse because it revolves on its axis at every line, but it always has another motion, and is related to a more distant centre. This melody of his verse contributes not a little to his grand style. Tennyson referred to this power of music when he wrote :

"O mighty-mouth'd inventor of harmonies,
O skill'd to sing of Time or Eternity."

24. MILTON'S STYLE AND DICTION

Milton's language of poetry is rather artificial and elaborate. His style is described by Raleigh as "a satin brocade, stiff with gold." He was well-read in Latin, and tried to naturalize Latin construction and Latin idioms in English. He even uses Latin words in their

Latin sense, not in their English connotation, thus giving an air of new-fangled strangeness to his language. The reader needs to get used to his manner before he can appreciate his melody and beauty of effect. The sonority of his verse is partly due to his predilection for Latin vocabulary. But it is not to be forgotten that he is a *stylist*. He chooses every word with great care. He applies the principle of balance and emphasis. His habit of inverting the natural English order of epithet and noun gives a greater prominence to the epithet. Conciseness and compression are marked qualities of his poetic style. It is the result of following the Latin model, and not the diffusive Italianate fashion of Spenser and his school. Every word in Milton's verse has its value in meaning and sound, and demands the closest attention. "A reader of Milton must be always upon duty, he is surrounded with a sense, it rises in every line, every word is to the purpose."

To read Milton is an intellectual discipline. One must pause on every word, and unravel the skin of meaning and association ; one must observe the synthetical relation of words and the intellectual or emotional content of the single line or a verse paragraph, as determined by the close texture of thought and melody, of stress and balance, of phrases and epithets. Weight, dignity, balance and precision are the abiding qualities of his style.

The Latin vocabulary, which he freely draws upon, gives him choice between alternative meanings. As Raleigh remarks, "He was not content to revive the exact classical meaning in place of the vague or weak English acceptation, he often kept both senses, and loaded the word with two meanings at once." Raleigh quotes an instance from *Samson Agonistes* :

"The specious monster, my accomplished snare."

Milton is conspicuously *classical* in his method and style. He often prefers to use the general and abstract terms for the sake of dignity and amplitude when he describes the individual and the concrete. The Romantic poets, on the other hand, use concrete and specific terms to express abstract conceptions and general truths. Necessarily, they have often to use familiar figures, and are unable to avoid grotesque associations. This accounts for the *bizarre* in the composition of a Romantic poet. Milton deliberately discards the commonplace words, familiar and staled by repeated use. His poetical taste could not tolerate any common or unworthy association. "His success—and he knew it—depended on the untiring maintenance of superhuman elevation. His choice of subject has not a little to do with the nature of his diction."

But after all, Milton's style—though we do not deny, Matthew Arnold's title of "Grand Style" to his composition—is artificial and removed from ordinary human speech ; and as such, it seems to be constructed by putting a sort of "gloss" on human thought and experience. His classical conventions, his preference of general and abstract terms, his artificial balance of phrase and epithet, degenerated into tricks of absurd periphrasis and meaningless personification in the poets of the eighteenth century. Raleigh rightly says that Milton may be called the inventor of the "poetic diction" of the eighteenth century.

Despite what Raleigh says, we must remember that Milton's poetical style has a grandeur and sublimity hardly attained by any other English poet. Addison says: "Milton's chief talent, and indeed, his distinguishing excellence, lies in the sublimity of his thought." "Milton, of all our English race," says Arnold, "is by his diction and rhythm the one artist of the highest rank in the great style that we have; this I take as requiring no discussion, this I take as certain."

The main features of Milton's style may be summed up thus:

1. **Latin Construction**—*since created Man* (*l. 573*) as in Latin—*post hominem creatum*. Compare also *summons read* (*l. 798*).

2. **Absolute Construction**—

> "Till, as a signal given, the uplifted spear
> Of their great Sultan was waving to direct,
> Their course, in even balance down they light"
> —(*ll. 347-349*).

3. **Ellipsis**—(a) of the article *to pass Rhene* (*ll. 325-353*); (b) of the verb: *cruel his eye* (*l. 604*) *though all our glory extinct* (*l. 142*); (c) of the pronoun: *as whom the fables name* (*l. 197*); (d) of the preposition: *fallen such a pernicious highth* (*l. 282*).

4. **Interchange of Parts of Speech**—of the verb for the noun; *beyond compare* (*ll. 587-588*): of the noun for the adjective: *their dread Commander* (*l. 589*): of the adjective for the noun; *for those rebellious* (*l. 71*); of the noun for the verb: *frighted the reign* (*l. 543*).

5. **Inversion of Adjectives**—*a dungeon horrible* (*l. 61*) *shapes immense* (*l. 760*).

6. **Radical sense of Latin words**—*Lie thus astonished* (*l. 266*); *with their darkness durst affront his light* (*l. 39*): *let none admire that riches grow in hell* (*ll. 690-691*); *horrid front* (*l. 593*).

7. **Punning**—

> To have found themselves not lost
> In loss itself (*ll. 525-526*)
> Which tempted our attempt (*l. 642*).

8. **Condensed Expression**—

> When their borrowed gold composed
> The call in Oreb (*ll. 483-484*)
> The ascending pile
> Stood fixed her stately highth (*ll. 721-722*).

9. **Use of *his* or *her* for *it***—

> and the thunder,
> Winged with red lightning and impetuous rage.
> Perhaps both spent his shafts (*ll. 174-176*)

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His form had yet not lost
All her original brightness (*ll. 591-592*)

10. **Use of Curtailed Participles**—*satiate fury* (*l. 176*) *with head uplift* (*l. 194*).

11. **Poetic use of Proper Names**—compare lines 406-411.

"Fulness of sound, weight of march, compactness of finish, fitness of words to things, fitness of pauses to thought, a strong grasp of the main idea while other ideas play round it, power of digression without loss of the power to return, equality of power vast spaces of imagination, sustained splendour when he soars—

'With plume so strong so equal and so soft ;'

a majesty in the conduct of thought, and a music in the majesty which fills it with solemn beauty, belong one and all to the style, and it gains its highest influence on us, and fulfils the ultimate need of a grand style in being the easy and necessary expression of the very character and nature of man. It reveals Milton, as much, sometimes even more, than his thought.

"It has its faults It is often, not only needlessly, but as it were of set purpose, involved ; 'not dense merely, but contorted or gnarled in structure.' It loses freedom of movement in its involution ; it delays too long as it winds in and out, to express the thought or the image ; it is rarely brief, even where brevity would be the life of thought. It is troubled with ellipses, and the inversions are sometimes, even when they are deliberate, wearisome. The Latinisms and forms of expression belonging to other languages are frequent and have been much blamed but they are a true part of the style and the natural property of the man. But blame as we like, one thing is true, the style is never prosaic. The poetic form was Milton's native tongue." —(*Stopford A. Brooke*).

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25. MILTON'S ART OF VERSIFICATION

Milton's *Paradise Lost* is written in blank verse. It is the first English epic written in blank verse. So Milton wrote in a note appended to *Paradise Lost* : "The measure is English heroic verse without rime, as that of Homer in Greek, and of Virgil in Latin. It rather is to be esteemed an example set, the first in English, of ancient liberty recovered to heroic poem from the troublesome and modern bondage of riming." Milton made this bold experiment at a time when nobody could think that an epic could be written in blank verse. Great tragedies had indeed been written before him in blank verse, but not an epic or even a narrative poem. Dryden held the view that rhymed couplet was best suited for tragedy or serious and sublime poetry, and that blank verse could be used only for the lighter and more colloquial purposes of comedy. So, as in point of matter, so also in form, Milton was original, for there was no precedent which he could follow, or which could serve as a warning. Thus he had to handle blank verse by his own ingenuity and at his own peril. In the words of Raleigh, "He left a high road behind him, along which many a tuneful pauper has since limped, but before him he found nothing but the jungle and false fires."

Verse Paragraph

Milton's most important contribution to the development of blank verse is his introduction and perfection of rhythmic period or verse paragraph. His object, as he says, was to compose periods with the sense variously drawn out from one verse into another not in "the jingling sound of like endings". For this purpose he united all the artifices employed by his predecessors like Marlowe and Shakespeare, and carried them to artistic and architectonic perfection. His individual lines do not stand disjoined, but they are all combined in order to produce a harmonious pattern. It is the period, the sentence, and still more the paragraph, that is the unit of Milton's verse. It is only in the period that the wave-length of Milton's verse is to be found. Milton's supremacy as a metrist lies in his ability to give a perfect and unique pattern to every paragraph, so that the full beauty of the line is found in its context. The long periods of Milton's poetry communicate a peculiar feeling. almost a physical sensation of a breathless leap, which cannot be procured from rhymed verse. The ability to control so many words at once is surely the evidence of most exceptional energy. The total result is that in the absence of the rhyme the sense of the rhythm is made to depend increasingly upon the sense ; or to use the phrase of Bridges, "The stress declares its supremacy". The verse paragraphs thus formed contain not only the essential rhythmical pause, but also the grammatical one. For an example, we may quote the opening lines of *Paradise Lost*, Book I—

> "On Man's first disobedience, and the fruit
> Of that forbidden Tree whose mortal taste
> Brought death into the world, and all our woe,
> With loss of Eden, till one greater Man
> Restore us, and regain the blissful seat,
> Sing, Heavenly Muse, that on the secret top
> Of Oreb, or of Senai, didst inspire
> That shepherd, who first taught the chosen seed
> In the beginning how the Heavens and Earth
> Rose out of Chaos : or, if Sion hill
> Delight thee more, and Siloa's brook that flowed
> Fast by the oracle of God, I thence
> Invoke thy aid to my adventurous song,
> That with no middle flight intends to soar
> Above the Aonian mount, while it pursues
> Things unattempted yet in prose or rhyme."

This verse paragraph contains sixteen lines. The sense, the rhythmic period, and the grammatic pauses are so beautifully linked together that they produce an excellent musical effect. Such verse paragraphs are a regular feature of Milton's versification. We may quote one more passage from his magnificent description of the mustering of the fiends in hell at the exhortation of Satan :

> "They heard, and were abashed, and up they sprung
> Upon the wing, as when men wont to watch
> On duty, sleeping found by whom they dread,
> Rouse and bestir themselves ere well awake.
> Nor did they not perceive the evil plight
> In which they were, or the fierce pains not feel ;
> Yet to their General's voice they soon obeyed
> Innumerable. As when the potent rod
> Of Amram's son, in Egypt's evil day,
> Waved round the coast, up called a pitchy cloud
> Of locusts, warping on the eastern wind,
> That o'er the realm of impious Pharaoh hung
> Like night, and darkened all the land of Nile :
> So numberless were those bad angels seen
> Hovering on wing under the cope of Hell,
> 'Twixt upper, nether, and surrounding fires ;
> Till, as a signal given, the uplifted spear
> Of their great Sultan waving to direct
> Their course, in even balance down they light
> On the firm brimstone, and fill all the plain :
> ....
> Beneath Gibraltar to the Libyan sands." —(*ll. 331-355*)

This is a beautiful example of the closeness of structure of Milton's verse. If one were to analyse his music line by line, the music would be lost. The individual line is relevant not merely in itself, not merely in relation to the lines immediately preceding and following, but also in relation to every other line in the passage.

Variety

In a long poem variety is indispensable. The same pause and rhythm, however musical or effective, if repeated too often, will grow stale and monotonous. Milton guards against this kind of monotony by introducing a large variety in rhythmic pauses. He continually varies the stresses in the iline, their number, their width, and their incidence, letting them fall, when it pleases his ear, on the odd as well as on the even syllables of the line. In a line of ten syllables the pause may fall anywhere from the second to the ninth syllable. Milton's chief concern is to vary the word in relation to the foot, and the sentence in relation to the line. No other metre allows of such a variety as blank verse, and no other metrist makes a more splendid use of this freedom than Milton. But he never forgets the basic pattern in spite of the infinite rhythmical variety he uses. De Quincey speaks of the "slow planetary wheelings" of Milton's verse because it revolvese on its xis at

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every line, but it always has another motion, and is related to a more distant centre.

The normal line, of course, should have ten syllables and five stresses.

Óf good/and/évil múch/they aŕ/gued t́hen.

But Milton, like all other poets of importance, used this merely as a basic pattern to be varied infinitely, not repeated exactly, in the composition of the complete design : otherwise the result would be intolerable monotony.

Thus he aims at rough equivalence, not exact similarity : there may be more than ten syllables, fewer than five stresses, variations of accent. So, since there is a natural tendency to pause slightly at the end of a line, an extra syllable may be introduced there in the time generally given to the pause. Again, in quick speech we slur certain unimportant vowels, especially before r, l, and n followed by a vowel, or before another vowel, so that the syllable in which they occur and the following syllable together take only as long to say as a normal syllable : in these cases the two syllables count as one, and the little ripple due to the slurring gives variety. So we get :

T́error/of H́eav(e)n,/t́hough fall(e)n;/íntend/át home

Their śpe/cious déeds/on éarth,/which ǵlor(y) éxcites.

Most other devices, however, are used not merely or mainly to prevent monotony, but to help the sense. So we get inverted stress, which throws emphasis upon the syllable not normally accented, *e. g.*,

Th́rive un/der é/vil and ẃork/éase out/of ṕain,

lines, with only four or even three full stresses, which involve particular emphasis on the stresses which remain and often quicken the pace of the line *e. g.*,

Into/the b́urn/ing Ĺake/their baĺe/ful śtreams,

Into/this Déep ;/and, in the gén/eral ´fall,

lines, with more than five stresses, which mean extra emphasis and a slowing-down of the normal pace, *e. g.*,

Rócks, Cáves,/lákes, f́ens,/b́ogs, d́ens,/and shádes,/of déath.

Another way in which Milton gives variety and emphasis is by altering the position of the Caesura, that is, the natural break or pause in the blank verse line.

Musical Effect

Milton's verse is by far more musical than that of any other English poet. The music of his verse is superb. Some critics go to the extent of saying that the meaning of *Paradise Lost* is entirely irrelevant and unessential when its music is so enchanting. Properly read, his verse produces exceedingly delicate and sweet music Hazlitt says, "Milton's blank verse is the only blank verse in the language (except Shakespeare's) that deserves the name of verse. I imagine that there are more perfect examples in Milton of musical expression, or of an adaptation of the sound and movement of verse to the meaning of the passage, than do all our other writers, whether of rhyme or blank verse, put together (with the exception of Shakespeare). Spenser in the most harmonious of our stanza writers, as Dryden is the most sounding and varied of our rhymists. But in neither is there anything like the same ear for music, the same power of approximating the varieties of poetical to those of musical rhythm, as there is in our great epic poet. The sound of his lines is moulded into the expression of the sentiment, almost of the very image. They rise and fall, pause or hurry rapidly on, with exquisite art, but without the least trick of affectation, as the occasion seems to require."

A very remarkable quality of Milton's music is its wonderful harmony between sense and sound. Here is an unmistakable contrast between the opening of the gates of Heaven :

> "Heaven opened wide
> Her ever-during gates, harmonious sound
> On golden hinges moving."

and the opening of the gates of Hell :

> "On a sudden open fly,
> With impetuous recoil and jarring sound,
> The infernal doors, and on their hinges great
> Harsh thunder, that the lowest bottom shook
> Of Erebus."

Milton's poetry abounds in exquisitely modulated passages where the verse floats up and down as if it had itself wings :

> "Such as the meeting soul may pierce
> In notes with many a winding bout
> Of linked sweetness link drawn out."

Matthew Arnold finds in his verse the "sure and flawless perfection of rhythm and diction". Landor confessed, "My ear is dissatisfied with everything for days together after the harmony of *Paradise Lost* .. I recur to it incessantly as the noblest specimen in the world of eloquence, harmony and genius." Tennyson, himself the king of sweet harmony, wrote in the sonnet entitled ***Milton*** :

> "O mighty-mouth'd inventor of harmonies,
> O skill'd to sing of Time or Eternity,
> God-gifted organ-voice of England,
> Milton, a name to resound for ages."

26. MILTON'S LATINISM

A conspicuous feature of Milton's language and style is Latinism. Latinism was, of course, very much in vogue in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Every great writer of note, whether in prose or verse, employed Latinism to impart weight, depth and aphoristic brevity to his diction and construction of sentences. Milton, being the greatest scholar of his day employed Latinism to almost an excessive degree. This use of Latinism imparted both strength and weakness to his poetry. Milton's Latinism has certain definite features which have been very clearly analysed by F. Gorse :

Many of the peculiarities of syntax and idiom found in *Paradise Lost* are not peculiar to Milton, but are characteristic of Elizabethan and seventeenth century writers generally. Milton, however, indulges in Latinism to a much greater extent than any other great English writer. There was a general tendency among the scholars of the period following the Revival of learning to introduce Latin words and constructions into their vernaculars, and to assimilate their grammar to that of the classical languages, just as in India there has been a tendency to introduce Sanskrit into the non-Sanskritic languages, and as there is now a tendency to introduce English words and idioms into all the Indian vernaculars. Milton was a keen student of the classics, and wrote Latin poems when still a youth. He even considered at one time whether he should not employ Latin as the language of the great epic he was planning, but fortunately he was wise enough to decide in favour of the use of the vernacular. In middle life he not only was Latin secretary to the Government, but also wrote many controversial pamphlets in Latin—pamphlets intended for continental as well as English readers. This constant use of Latin probably affected his English style,—it is noteworthy that his later poems contain more Latinisms than his earlier ones.

Milton's Latinisms may be divided into three classes. First, he constantly uses in their Latin meaning English words derived from Latin which are now used in a sense different from that of their Latin originals.

Second, Milton constantly makes use of Latin constructions and idioms, especially of such as are conducive to brevity of style by the omission of such words as pronouns and conjunctions. Many of the ellipses in which Milton abounds are really Latinisms, and his constant use of the case absolute is much more Latin than English. One of his special Latinisms is the participle construction such as, "never since created man."

Third, in many cases the whole arrangement of the words in a clause, or of the clauses in a sentence, is influenced by Latin syntax. The English syntax is in many passages, to quote Prof. Masson, "supplanted by Latin constructions. It is not only that Latin phrases and idioms are translated : it is that Milton bends, arranges, and builds up his own uninflected or scarce-inflected English on the system of the Latin syntax."

INTRODUCTION TO PARADISE LOST BOOK I

1. A BRIEF SUMMARY OF BOOK I

As the poem opens, the poet Milton states with remarkable brevity the theme of the whole epic-Man' first disobedience which brings sin and death into the world, reacting upon the whole human race, until redeemed by Christ Milton asks the Heavenly Muse to help him sing of the stated theme. The invocation to the Heavenly Muse shifts to an invocation to the Holy Spirit and ends with the poet's great purpose, to 'justify the ways of God to men'. Milton's professed aim is to show that God was just in his punishment to man.

Milton enumerates the theme in more detail and reviews Satan's sin, revolt against the Almighty, that caused him to be cast out of Heaven to 'dwell in admantine chains and penal fire' in Hell. On account of his pride, Satan wanted to equal God and with this end in view, he raised 'impious war' in Heaven. Milton, then describes Hell, 'a dungeon horrible', where 'peace and rest can never dwell' and 'hope never comes'. Milton describes the miserable and torturous condition of Satan and his followers suffering in a fiery Hell. Milton also throws light on Satan's unconquerable will and unflinching pride.

Satan discovers Beelzebub, the next angel in rank, rolling by his side in the lake of fire. Satan conceals the despair he is feeling and boasts that he is not totally lost. He is still unconquered, filled with hatred and 'courage never to submit or yield', and ready to find out how he can best take revenge upon God. Beelzebub however, flatters Satan, as he always does, but he expresses his doubts whether any rebellion on their part may not be part of God's plan. But Satan refuses to show any sign of weakness. He expresses his determination that if God brings good out of their evil, they in turn will again bring evil out of that good. He, therefore, suggests that they should find refuge from the fiery waves which are tossing them to the adjoining dreary plain.

Satan declares himself as the ruler of Hell. Having reached a place of comparative ease, he asks his companions to follow him. The other fallen angels must follow him to the plain, for if they did not do so, they might be further tortured by God. Satan proceeds to gather his companions around him by a mixture of flattery, threats and sarcasm. Milton describes the huge shield of Satan which is hanging on his shoulder like the moon. His spear is even bigger than the tallest pine tree found on the Norwegian hills. The multitude of angels floating on the lake of fire is likened to autumnal leaves scattered on the brooks in Vallombrosa, or to the scattered seeds floating on the sea, or to the floating dead bodies and broken chariots of the Memphian army.

Milton then enumerates the fallen angels, now devils, by giving them the names under which they were later worshipped as false gods in heathen countries. Each is briefly characterized. The first is Molock, an Ammonite God to whom children were sacrificed. The other devils who are mentioned by Milton are chemos, 'the obscene dread of Moab's sons ; Baalim and Astorath, worshipped by Phoenicians and canaanites, Thammuj, worshipped by the Syrians and Phoenicians ; Dagon, the god of Philistines ; Rimmon. the Syrian god; and Belial, who was not worshipped at one place, but who filled with lust and violence many places of worship as well as courts and palaces, for he loved vice for its own sake.

Satan makes a vehement appeal to his fallen companions to carry on the war by 'fraud or ginle'. In response, the angels cheer their leader. Then Mammon whose greed had been known in Heaven where he kept his looks fixed on the golden pavements, leads some of his fellow denizens of Hell as they ransack the bowls of mother earth for gold and other precious metals. With amazing speed they build a palace, called Pandemonium, for Satan and his followers.

Milton narrates how all the devils flock to Pandemonium, the devils reducing their sizes so as to accommodate themselves in the palace. Thus their great consultation begins in the great hall.

2. THE ARGUMENT OF BOOK I

Paradise Lost, *Book I*, begins in the middle of the story. It opens with reference to Adam and Eve's disobedience to the express command of God not to taste the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge :

> "Of Man's first disobedience, and the fruit
> Of that forbidden tree whose mortal taste
> Brought death into the World, and all our woe.
> With loss of Eden, till one great Man
> Restore us, and regain the blissful seat,
> Sing, Heavenly Muse."

This event of man's transgression of the command of God occurs when chronologically the story of *Paradise Lost* has already gone half way through. Chronologically the story of *Paradise Lost* begins with the rebellion of one-third of the angels under the leadership of Satan against the absolute rule and authority of God in Heaven. Satan, formerly an Archangel next in power and glory only to God, revolts against God in a bid to occupy the throne of Heaven. A fierce war takes place in Heaven between the faithful and the fallen angels. The Almighty God defeats Satan and his rebellious hosts and imprisons and confines them into a burning lake of sulphur in Hell. This was,

"The dismal situation waste and wild,
A dungeon horrible, on all sides round,
As one great furnace flamed ; yet from those flames
No light ; but rather darkness visible
Served only to discover sights of woe.
Regions of sorrow, doleful shades, where peace
And rest can never dwell, hope never comes
That comes to all, but torture without end
Still urges, and a fiery deluge fed
With ever burning sulphur unconsumed."

Creation of the Human Race

The next great event in the story of *Paradise Lost* is the creation of Adam and Eve. God also created Paradise for their dwelling. Adam and Eve lived in perfect happiness and bliss as immortal spirits under the direct supervision and benediction of God. They were masters of the whole world, free to do or enjoy every heavenly bliss except that they were forbidden to taste the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge. Satan had come to know of the creation of Man and Paradise, and also of that one command or restriction put on him. Therefore, Satan sought to beguile and seduce Man to taste the forbidden fruit and thereby, defeat and frustrate God's scheme. With this aim in view, Satan plans to call and collect all his fallen angels to decide their future course of action through discussion among themselves :

"Consult how we may henceforth most offend
Our enemy, our own loss how repair,
How overcome this dire calamity,
What reinforcement we may gain from hope,
If not, what resolution from despair."

Satan's Address to the Fallen Angels

Satan calls all his fallen angels and rouses them from their slumber in the lake of fire. He seeks to infuse in them renewed spirit, hope and courage to carry on their rebellion against the Almighty through some other means :

"What though the field be lost ?
All is not lost —the unconquerable will,
And study of revenge, immortal hate,
And courage never to submit or yield ;
And what is else not to be overcome ?"

Thus he first rouses Beelzebub, the next in command to him. Satan and Beelzebub recognize each other and bemoan their fallen state. Satan is still the same Archangel, though fallen. He still retains his imperial character, his haughty head, his unbroken spirit, his unyielding courage and mettle. So he tells Beelzebub :

"Fallen Cherub, to be weak is miserable,
Doing or suffering : but of this be sure—

To do aught good never will be our task,
But ever to do ill our sole delight,
As being the contrary to His high will
Whom we resist."

So Satan himself first rises from the lake of fire, standing erect like a mountain peak, and calls all his hosts. They all assemble around him waiting their leader's command. The more important of them are, besides Beelzebub, Moloch, Chemos, Baalim, Ashtaroth, Thammuz, Dagon, Rimmon, Belial and Titan.

Addressing them as "myriads of immortal Spirits", Satan calls upon them to get united with renewed courage to wreak their vengeance on the Almighty. Hearing his words "millions of flaming swords" shine in the gloom of Hell. They all raise a dreadful voice to pledge their fidelity to their leader, Satan. At this, Satan announces that a council of all the fallen angels would be held at "Pandemonium, the high capital of Satan and his peers". As soon as the command is passed, millions and millions of Satan's lieutenants and peers rush to the Pandemonium. Finding the great council hall of Pandemonium too small, the angels reduce themselves to the small size of "faery elves" and "throng numberless" in the hall of that "infernal court" for their deliberations. The summons are read and their consultation begins.

3. THE THEME OF PARADISE LOST, BOOK I— AN ANALYSIS

The Invocation

The *Paradise Lost*, *Book I*, begins, in keeping with the ancient epic convention with and invocation to the goddess of poetry, the Heavenly Muse. Milton in the true spirit of a humble devotee, seeks inspiration from the goddess to write his great poem. He says that he proposes to write an epic of a very high standard on a subject never attempted before in prose or poetry :

"I thence
Invoke thy aid to my adventurous song,
That with no middle flight intends to soar
Above theAonian mount, while it pursues
Things unattempted yet in prose or rhyme."

Then Milton seeks inspiration from the Spirit of God, for this Spirit alone knows all the secrets of the creation of the universe out of chaos. Therefore invoking the Divine Spirit, Milton prays :

"What in me is dark
Illumine, what is low raise and support ;
That, to the highth of this great argument,
I may assert Eternal Providence,
And justify the ways of God to men."

Hell as Satan's Prison

Milton then gives a very graphic description of Hell where

Satan was confined by God after his expulsion from Heaven. Hell is described as a "fiery gulf," a lake of molten fire. It is a dark and dismal place dimly lit with sulphurous fire. The poet describes it in these words :

> "A dungeon horrible, on all sides round,
> As one great furnace flamed ; yet from those flames
> No light ; but rather darkness visible
> Served only to discover sights of woe,
> Regions of sorrow, doleful shades, where peace,
> And rest can never dwell, hope never comes
> That comes to all, but torture without end
> Still urges, and a fiery deluge, fed
> With ever burning sulphur unconsumed."

This was the eternal prison of Satan and his hosts. It was here that,

> "So stretched out huge in length the Arch-Fiend lay,
> Chained on the burning lake."

Satan's numberless peers and followers also lay there tossing in the livid flames of Hell.

Satan's Address to Beelzebub

Satan raised his head from the flames to survey the entire region. He saw lying close to his side his second in command, Beelzebub. He roused Beelzebub from his stupor and sought to encourage, embolden and inspire him to renew the battle against the Almighty. Satan tells Beelzebub that they should not submit themselves to God even though they have been defeated. Encouraging him he says that though "the field be lost, all is not lost". Real defeat comes to him who dishonourably falls on his knees and seeks peace from his foe :

> "To bow and sue for grace
> With suppliant knee, and deify his power
> Who, from the terror or his arm, so late
> Doubted his empire—that were low indeed,
> That were an ignominy and shame beneath
> This downfall."

Finally, Satan tells Beelzebub that they would never yield to God, never accept His authority, and never follow the path of good prescribed by Him :

> To do aught good never will be our task,
> But ever to do ill our sole delight,
> As being the contrary to His high will
> Whom we resist."

Satan and Beelzebub, thereupon, decide to collect all their fallen peers, discuss matters with them and decide the future course of their action and their strategy by mutual discussion and agreement.

Satan Mourns

Satan and Beelzebub now rise from their fiery lake and survey the dismal region around them. This dark and dreary region reminds them of the beautiful celestial Heaven from where they had been driven away for ever. The contrast between the celestial Heaven which they had left and the dismal Hell which had now been assigned to them fills them with grief and rage. But Satan still retains his unyielding spirit and unconquerable will :

> "A mind not to be changed by place or time.
> The mind is its own place, and in itself
> Can make a heaven of Hell, a Hell of Heaven."

Here was a place where he could rule supreme :

> "Here we may reign secure ; and, in my choice,
> To reign is worth ambition, through in Hell :
> Better to reign in Hell than serve in Heaven."

The Train of Satan's Followers

On Satan's call "Awake, arise, or be for ever fallen" numberless "fallen angels" arise from their fiery slumber and gather around their great leader. The poet enumerates the more important of them. The most important of them, after Beelzebub, was Moloch. The poet refers to him as a "horrid King, besmeared with blood of human sacrifice, and parents' tears." After him came Chemos, the obscene and lustful god worshipped by the Israelites. Then came two feminine devils, Baalim and Ashtaroth, for whose sake the Israelites forsook their real God. Then came Astoreth whom the Phoenicians called Queen of Heaven, and to whom the virgins paid their vows and songs. Thammuz came next with whose fate the syrians had great sympathy. Then came Dagon, the seamonster, half human and half fish. Rimmon came next who later had his seat in fair Damascus. Then came Osiris, Isis, Orus and their train "with monstrous shapes and sorceries abused". Belial came last, the most lewd and vicious of the angels who fell from Heaven. These were the principal devils that gathered around Satan on his call. They were followed by numberless other spirits and monsters that cannot be counted. All these came "with looks downcast and damp".

Satan's Address to Them

Addressing them as Princes, Potentates, Warriors and myriads of immortal Spirits, he asks them whether they have finally reconciled themselves to their fallen state. He asks them to gather together and regain their lost splendour and glory not by open war with the Almighty, but by some ingenious strategy and planning. Then he informs them that God is going to create a new world and implant there a new race of beings called Man :

> "A generation whom his choice regard
> Should favour equal to the Sons of Heaven."

He suggests that by some ingenious trick or planning they should win over this race of Man to their side and be worshipped by them as their gods. This suggestion is loudly acclaimed and accepted by the legions of devils. Millions of them raise their voices and their swords to approve Satan's proposal.

The Great Council

Thereupon Satan invites them to assemble in the Pandemonmum for fuller discussions and consensus. At Statan's words all the devils rush into the Pandemonium. But finding the great hall too small to accomodate them all in their normal shape and size, they reduce themselves to the small size of the faiery elves and adjust themselves into the hall. Thus the great council begins in the Pandemonium.

4. DESCRIPTION OF HELL

The Situation of Hell

After the defeat of Satan and his hideous hosts, God carved out a dark and dismal place called Hell in remote corner of space to serve as the prison of torments for Satan's rebellious crew. This Hell was situated as far removed from Heaven as three times the distance from the centre of the earth to the Vault of Heaven :

> "Here their prison ordained
> In utter darkness, and their portion set,
> As far removed from God and light of Heaven
> As from the centre thrice to the utmost pole."

Description of Hell

God created this Hell so far removed from Heaven to serve as the prison for Satan and his rebellious followers. Therefore, God made it as dreary, hideous and tormenting as it was possible. It was a hideous place, waste and wild, in a limitless space of darkness. It appeared like a huge lake of liquid fire on the surface of which lay tossing in livid flames innumerable fallen angels. It was a dark pit dimly lit with flames of sulphureous fire. Here was "darkness visible" that made the pit even more hideous to view. So the poet describes the Hell in these words :

> "A dungeon horrible, on all sides round,
> As one great furnace flamed ; yet from those flames
> No light ; but rather darkness visible
> Served only to discover sights of woe,
> Regions of sorrow, doleful shade, where peace
> And rest can never dwell, hope never comes
> That comes to all, but torture without end
> Still urges, and fiery deluge fed
> With ever burning sulphur unconsumed."

The lake of fire described as "inflamed sea" is "overwhelmed with floods and whirlwinds of tempestuous fire". It is a place plunged in "mournful gloom" !. The contrast between the blissful Heaven from which Satan had been driven out and the tormenting Hell in which he had now been confined is terribly shocking to him. Therefore remorsefully he says ;

"Farewell, happy fields,
Where joy for ever dwells ! Hail, horrors ! hail,
Infernal World ! and thou profoundest Hell,
Receive the new possessor."

The dry land in Hell is as gloomy and dismal was the lake of fire. In fact, it was hardly land which ever burned with solid fire, as the lake with liquid fire. Milton gives the following description of this part of Hell :

'. . . . such appeared in hue as when the force of subterranean wind transports a hill Torn from Pelorus, or the shatter'd side of thundering Aetna, whose combustible and fuelled entrails, thence conceiving fire. Sublimed with mineral fury, and the wind. And leave a signed bottom all involved with stearch and smoke."

5. TRAIN OF DEVILS IN BOOK I

Devils as Fallen Angels

Nearly one third of the angels of Heaven rebelled against God under the leadership of Satan. After their defeat by Heavenly Powers they were all driven out of Heaven and hurled headlong down into a dark Hell specially created by God for their confinement. Hell was a dark lake of liquid sulphureous fire burning on all sides. On the surface of this fiery lake there lay floating in trance Satan and other numberless fallen angels. Thus, they lay for nine days and nine nights :

"Nine times the space that measures day and night
To mortal men, he, with his horrid crew,
Lay vanquished, rolling in the fiery gulf,
Confounded, though immortal.

Satan was the first to gain consciousness. He saw the dreary and dreadful scene all round him, and the hopeless condition of his own and his numberless followers. Still burning with a desire to take vengeance on the Almighty, he roused all his peers and followers to shake off their slumber and assemble to discuss and decide their future course of action. Therefore, one by one, the devils arise from the fiery lake and gather around their leader to pledge their fidelity to him. Thus, Milton describes the train of the devils one by one.

Satan

Before his rebellion and fall, Satan was the highest of the Archangels. In his glory, power and position he was next only to God. But not satisfied with this position he sought to occupy the throne of God himself through war. One-third of the angels of Heaven joined the side of Satan and rebelled against God. But they suffered a disgraceful defeat at the hands of the Almighty. Satan and his crew were, therefore, hurled down from Heaven into a dark burning lake of fire called Hell created by God for their eternal damnation and imprisonment :

"Him the Almighty Power
Hurled headlong flaming from the ethereal sky,
With hideous ruin and combustion, down
To bottomless perdition."

Thereafter Satan and his hideous crew remained confined into the fiery pit for nine days and nine nights. Satan floating upon the fiery lake looked like a huge sea-monster or an island :

"So stretched out huge in length the Arch-Fiend lay,
Chained on the burning lake ; nor ever thence
Had risen, or heaved his head, but that the will
And high permission of all-ruling Heaven
Left him at large to his own dark designs."

Thereupon he raised his mighty stature above the flames and flying upon his expanded wings he alighted on the shore of the fiery lake to call his disgraced peers and followers for discussion and decision as to their future course of action.

Beelzebub

Next to Satan was Beelzebub. Milton calls him next to Satan both in power and in crime. Long afterwards he was worshipped in Palestine. Before his rebellion and fall he was an Archangel in Heaven. Satan and he conspired together to revolt against God. So Satan says that it was he who,

"With the Mightiest raised me to contend,
And to the fierce contention brought along
Innumerable force of Spirits armed,
That durst dislike he reign, and me preferring,
His utmost power with adverse power opposed
In dubious battle on the plains of Heaven,
And shook his throne."

Beelzebub too, like Satan, though defeated, remains undaunted. He is still prepared to hazard another chance against the Almighty. He entirely agreed with Satan and said that their forces—

"Will soon resume
New courage and revive, though now they lie
Grovelling and prostrate on you lake of fire,
As we erewhile, astounded and amazed ;
No wonder, fallen such a perinicious highth."

Moloch

Moloch was next in the hierarchy. He came forward first from the fiery lake at Satan's call. Later he came to be worshipped by the Ammonites. Children were sacrificed on his altar. Therefore the poet refers to him as a,

"Horrid king, besmeared with blood,
Of human sacrifice, and parents' tears ;

Though, for the noise of drums and timbrels loud,
Their children's cries unheard that passed through fire,
To his grim idol."

Even, Solomon, the wise king was so deluded by him that he built a temple for Moloch right against the temple of God on the same hill in the Valley of Hinnom. Later on the Jews came to hate and condemn this Valley of Moloch so much that they called it Gehenna, meaning a type of scandalous hell.

Chemos

Next came Chemos. His other name was Peor. Nc beguiled the Israelites to worship him on their hazardous journey from Nile :

"When he enticed
Israel in Sittim, on their march from Nile,
To do him wanton rites, which cost them woe."

He grew into a very obscene and lustful god whom people dreaded. He extended his area of worship to the scandalous hill of Moloch. He would have wielded greater power still but for the fact that good Josiah drove him and Moloch thence to Hell.

Baalim and Ashtaroth

They made a pair of feminine spirits. The Israelites forsook their real and true gods to worship them. Ashtoreth was called the queen of heaven, with crescent horns. The virgins worshipped her nightly by the moon and offered her "vows and songs". A temple was built to her on the scandalous mountain of Moloch, where she was worshipped by the idolatresses.

Thammuz

Thammuz was worshipped by the Syrian women :

"Where annual wound in Lebanon allured
The Syrian damsels to lament his fate
In amorous ditties all a summer's day."

Young virgins offered love-songs upon his altar.

Dagon

Dagon was a sea-monster, "upward man and downward fish." The head and hands of his statue had been chopped off by the Heavenly ark in his own temple. Therefore he felt so disgraced in the presence of his worshippers that he fell flat and cried. Yet he had a temple in Azotus and he was dreaded in Palestine and Gaza.

Rimmon

Rimmon had his seat in beautiful Damascus on the banks of Abbana and Pharphar. His temple was also situated against the temple of God. Ahaz, the conqueror of Damuscus, became his adorer. This king hand a temple built to him in Jerusalem on the same style and pattern as he had seen in Damascus.

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Osiris, Isis, Orus

Then came Osiris, Isis and Orus in a group. They had monstrous shapes of beasts whom the Egyptians worshipped. Later they were taken by the Israelites when they had conquered Egypt. However, Jehova destroyed all these monster gods in one stroke only.

Belial

Last came Belial. He was the most lustful and vicious devil that fell from Heaven. He had no temple built to him, yet he polluted the temples and altars of God whenever he found the priests slack or inattentive in their adorations to God. He and his followers also wandered forth in courts and palaces, streets and markets to pollute the people. So the poet says :

"In courts and palaces he also reigns,
And in luxurious cities, where the noise,
Of riot ascends above their loftiest towers,
And injury and outrage ; and when night
Darkens the streets, then wander forth the sons
Of Belial, flown with insolence and wine."

These were the principal devils that fell from Heaven with Satan and Beelzebub. Numberless other devils, demons, monsters and spirits also fell with them, and all of them got up and gathered around Satan at his call. So the poet says :

"These were the prime in order and in might ;
The rest were long to tell."

6. SATAN'S ADDRESS TO THE DEVILS

Satan in the Lake of Liquid Fire

Satan and his numberless hosts had been driven away from Heaven to the bottomless pit of Hell :

"Him the Almighty Power
Hurled headlong flaming from the ethereal sky,
With hideous ruin and combustion, down
To bottomless perdition, there to dwell
In adamantine chains and penal fire,
Who durst defy the Omnipotent to arms."

In this bottomless perdition, Satan and his forces lay stunned for nine days and nine nights. Then from that stupor Satan was the first to awake. He saw all around him livid walls of flames overblown with whirlwinds and tempests of fire. On raising his head he saw lying by his side Beelzebub who was next to him in rank and power.

Satan's Address to Beelzebub

Satan turned to Beelzebub and roused him from his stupor of dismay and fear. He spoke to him encouraging and inspiring words to revive his dormant will and valour to decide their future course of action. Satan's speech to Beelzebub on this occasion has come to be recognized as one of the masterpieces of English literature. This speech has supplied more quotable lines than any other situation or occasion in *Paradise Lost*.

Satan tells Beelzebub that in spite of their shattering defeat, they should not yield to the Almighty. None that continues to have an inconquerable will and courage can ever be defeated. Their defeat at the hands of the Almighty is not final. They have to choose another strategy and course of action to continue their war against God. They have lost the field, but this does not mean that they have lost all chances of recovery and restoration of their power and position. They have only to collect and keep their will and courage, and plan and act with determination and fortitude, and they will regain their lost power and glory. So Satan says :

"What though the field be lost ?
All is not lost—the unconquerable will,
And study of revenge, immortal hate,
And courage never to submit or yield :
And what is else not to be overcome ?
That glory never shall his wrath or might
Extort from me."

Satan further explains to Beelzebub that they are immortal like God and His angels. Therefore, they can never die. And if it is so, why should they fear Divine wrath or power. They should swear never to accept God's authority over them or to bow before Him :

"To bow and sue for grace
With suppliant knee, and deify his power,
Who, from the terror of this arm, so late
Doubted his empire—that were low indeed ;
That were an ignominy and shame beneath
This downfall."

Then comes Satan's master-stroke :

"Fallen Cherub, to be weak is miserable,
Doing or suffering."

Explaining their future course of action to Beelzebub, Satan says that their primary concern should be with the support and propagation of evil. They should suppress good and uphold evil :

"To do aught good never will be our task,
But ever to do ill our sole delight,
As being the contrary to His high will,
Whom we resist."

They should try to draw out of every good some means of evil. Pursuing this course their effort should be to annoy and offend the Almighty as much as possible and to disturb and destroy his plans :

"And reassembling our afflicted powers,
Consult how we may henceforth most offend,

Our enemy, our own loss how repair,
How overcome this dire calamity,
What reinforcement we may gain from hope.
If not, what resolution from despair."

Satan explains that success or defeat, joy or grief, heaven or hell depends upon will, determination and attitude of mind. As for himself he says that he possesses a mind that would convert even the most unfavourable and adverse circumstances into favourable circumstances :

"A mind not to be changed by place or time.
The mind is its own place, and in itself
Can make a Heaven of Hell, a Hell of Heaven."

In the end, Satan says that he cannot accept a position of subordination to any power or authority, including the Almighty Himself. He would far prefer a position of authority in Hell to a position of slavery in Heaven :

"Here we may reign secure ; and, in my choice,
To reign is worth ambition, though in Hell,
Better to reign in Hell than serve in Heaven."

Satan's Address to other Fallen Angels

Satan, then, turned to other fallen angels who were floating in the fiery lake, innumerable like autumn leaves floating in a stream. In a thundering voice he exhorted them ;

"Awake, arise, or be for ever fallen !"

Hearing their leader's voice they all arose from their fiery flood and gathered around him. Satan exhorted them not to accept their defeat. He counselled them to plan some new strategy to continue their warfare against the Almighty. Then, he informs them that the Almighty has created a new race of beings called Man. God has created Man in his own likeness and proposes to substitute the human race in their place. Therefore, Satan suggests that they should work combinedly to win Man on their side by deception and thereby defeat and frustrate God's scheme. Thus, they can carry on their war against Heaven indirectly. With these suggestions Satan invited all of them to assemble in Pandemonium for detailed mutual discussion and decision regarding their future course of action. His suggestion was enthusiastically approved by all the fallen angles in one voice :

"He spake ; and, to confirm his words, out-flew
Millions of flaming swords, drawn from the thighs
Of mighty Cherubim : the sudden blaze
Far round illumined Hell."

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7. SATAN IN BOOK I

Satan as the Central Figure

Satan is the central figure in *Paradise Lost*. Whether Satan is the hero of *Paradise Lost* or not may be a matter of controversy, but there is not denying the fact that he is the most dynamic and the most impressive character in the epic. If *Paradise Lost* exists for any one character, it is Satan, just as *Iliad* exists for Achilles, and *Odyssey* for Odysseus. It is in the figure of Satan that the imperishable significance of *Paradise Lost* is centred, his vast unyielding spirit symbolizes the profound antimony of modern consciousness. Milton has drawn the character of Satan so flawlessly and so powerfully that some critics go to the extent of saying that Milton belonged to the Devil's party. Tillyard points out that Milton's own heroic energy is brought out in the character of Satan. He says : "There is only one figure in *Paradise Lost* whose strength is shown through conflict and endurance. This is Satan, and it is through him that Milton's own heroic energy is most powerfully shown."

His Gigantic Stature

The first thing about Satan that strikes the reader in his gigantic stature and physical vigour. Satan has been portrayed by Milton on a huge scale, huge in physical valour and stature, huge in the power of will and courage and huge in the passions and sentiments. Lying in the lake of liquid fire, he looked like a huge sea-monster, a Leviathan, an island on which ship-wrecked mariners could pitch their tents. Roused by an indomitable spirit of hatred and vengeance against the Almighty, Satan stands erect on the fiery lake. So huge is his stature that the entire Hell is shaken and disturbed as a lake may be disturbed by a tempest.

"Forthwith upright he rears from off the pool
His mighty stature ; on each hand the flames
Driven backward slope their pointing spires
and, rolled
In billows, leave in the midst a horrid vale."

When from the fiery lake he flew to the shore on his expanded wings, the air "felt unusual weight". From that dreary shore he addressed his numberless legions in the thundering voice :

"Till on the beach
Of that inflamed sea he stood, and called
His legions—Angel Forms, who lay entranced
Thick as autumnal leaves that strow the brooks."

His Indomitable Will

The quality that strikes us most in Satan in Book I is his indomitable will and unbending courage. Even after his stunning defeat at the hands of God and his fall from Heaven and eternal damnation in Hell, his indomitable will and courage do not fail him. The idea of submitting before God and seeking His mercy and forgiveness is repugnant to him :

"To bow and sue for grace
With suppliant knee, and deify his power

Who, from the terror of his arm, so late
Doubted his empire—that were low indeed,
That were an ignominy and shame beneath
This downfall."

This unyielding spirit of defiance and unquenchable thirst for revenge and vengeance on his Almighty for promt him to keep up his war against God. He refuses to accept his final defeat at the hands of God :

"What though the field be lost ?
And is not lost—the unconquerable will,
And study of revenge, immortal hate,
And courage never ;o submit or yield :
And what is else not to be overcome ?
That glory never shall his wrath or might
Extort from me."

This is the most dominant and distinguishing quality of Satan's character.

Satan as a Leader

Satan also possesses wonderful quality of leadership. The very fact that one-third of the Heavenly angels accepted his leadership and revolted against God Himself is enough proof of his great leadership. Even after their shattering defeat at the hands of God, and their eternal damnation in the flames of Hell, he was able to mobilize them again around him and infuse new spirit into them. His encouraging address electrifies their dormant spirit and drooping heart :

"Princes, Potentates,
Warriors, the Flower of Heaven—once yours ;
now lost,
If such astonishment as this can seize,
Eternal Spirits !
... ...
Awake, arise, or be for ever fallen !"

He tells Beelzebub that weakness is sin, weakness is misery misery and cause of eternal suffering :

Fallen cherub, to be weak is miserable,
Doing or suffering.

He means to say that one must show strength even in suffering. Heroic suffering brings honour. In this spirit, he exhorts all the fallen angels to combine once again and carry on their warfare against the Almighty. Thus, they can regain their lost position in Heaven, or at least gain some comfort and consolation from the thought that they fought well, what if they lost. This in itself is a gain. Therefore, he invites all his compeers to meet and discuss and finalize their future course of action :

"Consult how we may henceforth most offend
Our enemy, our own loss how repair,

How overcome this dire calamity,
What reinforcement we may gain from hope,
If not, what resolution from despair."

He himself tells them that it is impossible to subdue God in direct fight. They should choose a path of indirect warfare against God. In this connection, he informs them that God has created a new world, and inhabited it with a new race of beings called Man. He has created Man in His own likeness and loves him like His son. Therefore, they should try to win over Man to their side and thus foil and frustrate the plan of God. This is his clever planning, a strategy worth admiration for a leader in the position of Satan.

"Our better part remains
To work in close design, by fraud or guile,
What force effected not, that he no less
At length from us may find, who overcomes
By force hath overcome but half his foe."

An Indefatigable Hero

Thus Satan is an indefatigable hero. Defeat cannot subdue him ; suffering cannot tame him ; confinement even in the lake of fire cannot imprison him. He remains undaunted, invincible unyielding even in the blazing flames of Hell. He boldly tells Beelzebub that he possesses :

'A mind not to be changed by place or time.
The mind is its own place, and in itself
Can make a Heaven of Hell, a Hell of Heaven."

8. CRITICAL OPINIONS

1. The First Scene and the Description of Hell

The invocation over, the poet plunges into his story, following epic precedent by opening 'in the midst of things', as he explains in the 'Argument' to Book I. A question addressed to the Muse, a convention of the epic established by Homer's *Illiad*, introduces the first scene :

Say first, for Heav'n hides nothing from thy view
Nor the deep Tract of Hell, say first what cause
Mov'd our Grand Parents in that happy State,
Favour'd of Heav'n so highly, to fall off
From their creator, and transgress his will
For one restraint, Lords of the World besides ?
Who first seduc'd them to that foul revolt ? (I. 27-33)

The question draws attention to the significance of the scene we are about to see ; the answer, which indentifies the seducer as the 'infernal serpent', quickly sketches the history of Satan's rebellion (it will be fully described later) and thus provides the background of the action that now unfolds. The opening scene is one that immediately grips the imagination through its violence. turbulence and mystery.

Satan and his 'horrid crew' lie rolling on a lake of fire. Unlike Dante, who in his inferno presents the underworld in sharp, clear outline, Milton describes Hell as a place of immense but mysterious forces. The lack of visual clarity increased the evocative power of his account. We realize from the outset that Hell is a state of mind, as well as a place (Satan will only realize this later) : that its fiery tempests express the anguish and passion of the fallen spirits ; that its mental and physical attributes—'bottomless perdition' 'huge affliction', 'Regions of sorrow—are interchangeable. We are also once aware that Hell is a state which has some relation to ordinary human experience, but which is yet quite unlike our experience because it is absolute and final. Thus the fires of Hell 'discover' sights of woe, yet they do not cast light but rather 'darkness visible' : the oxymoron robs the flame of any of those cheerful qualities that we associate with light. The over burning sulphur of Hell is unconsumed ; and God's justice—in contrast to its operation in our world—is untempered by mercy and leaves no room or hope. —(*John Orrell*)

2. Fallen Angels and Hell

To some extent the stratagenus of the fallen angels can be said to be built but the critic appraising them must beware of slipping into fallacies. It would be mistaken to call the fallen angels absurd when the human race is the victim of their absurdity. It would also be mistaken to call them tragic since the tragedy of damnation takes root in an area of choice and ultimate evil has up choice but itself. Repentance is a possibility excluded from Hell's concave and Satan is not Dr. Faustus but something inexorably grimmer. Indeed the quality of the debts depends on its being consistent, plausible and even realistic on its own terms while at the same time calling on the reader to recognize the extent to which those terms are self-defeating. It is no accident that the debate opens with a mis-statement of the paradox after Beelzebub's decisive intervention. "Their spite still serves His glory to augment" is the poem's restrorative judgment and the implicit contempt in spite" the shrinkage of the world by its juxtaposition with "glory", places the plan in its true setting. At the same time, the consequence of that "spite" is "to" confound the race of mankind in one root and Earth with Hell To mingle and involve" so that the reader is not simply invited but obliged to respond to the event in two perspectives. None of these subtleties can be found in Milton's sources and it is these subtleties which give creative significance to common places which might to otherwise have petrified into cliches.

The same cautions apply to Milton's Hell. "Myself am Hell" besides being existentially more valid than Sartre's proposition that Hell is other people, is part of the tradition of seventeenth century thinking. But Milton gives life the view that Hell is a state of mind as well as a place by high accurate fitting of the mind to the place. The freedom with which the poetry moves from the exterior to the inner landscape obliges us to give each word in it a continuous

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extension of significance. Other poets have elaborated conventionally on the torments of hell but not everyone has been able to give their description an inner as well as an architectural meaning.

—(*B. Rajan*).

3. Milton's Hell

It is misnomer to talk about "Milton's Hell". There are at least three distinct physical Hells in *Paradise Lost* in addition to the ethical or moral Hell that gives unity to all of them. Basically the first Hell is a place of darkness which the lurid flickering light of fire serves only to make more dark (ii. 62ff). Geologically, it is a volcanic region, "fed with ever burning sulphur unconsumed". Satan and his followers have fallen into a "fiery gulf," a lake that burns continually with liquid fire." The beach of that "inflamed sea" marks the beginning of a "dreary plain, forlorn and wild." When Satan "rears off from the poll his mighty stature", he flies to what seems dry land.

> If it were land that ever burned
> With solid, as the lake with liquid fire. (l. 228-29).

The land proves to be "firm brimstone," but the heat is as intense as was that of the boiling pool, with the result that Satan, walks delicately with "uneasy steps over the burning marl." Heat is everywhere in 'the torried clime... ..valuated with fire." In the background, were learn, is a volcanic mountain :

> There stood a hill not far, whose grisly top
> Belched fire and folling smoke ; the rest entire
> Shone with a glossy scurf—undoubted sign
> That in his womb was hid metallic ore
> The work of sulphur. (l. 670-74)

While there are both classical and medieval analogues to other aspects of Milton's first Hell, those I have been emphasised are different from the traditional and familiar elements to lead me to believe that Milton was drawing upon visual memory as well as imagination and combining actual sense impressions with literary reminiscence. In his blindness, I think that his memory went back to an occasion during his Italian journey when he had visited the Phlegracan Fields, lying close to Nepales, near which the Puteoli vills of Manso is situated.

The topographical similarities between the Phlegracan Fields and Milton's first Hell are striking even today. The Solfatara—called in ancient times the Forum Vulcani—is the creator of a half extinct Volcano, destitute of vegetation ; on the right, there is still a pool of hot water ; other pools have formed and disappeared. The "dreary plain" around the lake is still as when Satan and his companions walked with uneasy steps over the burning marl. But a volcanic district is not static. Hills are thrown up, depressions and pools change their places. The most spectacular in the Phlegracan Fields occurred in 1538 when a mountain—Monte Nuovo—appeared almost overnight. —(*M. H. Nicolson*).

4. The Character of Satan

With Blake, Shelley, Byron, the "Satanic School" of Milton criticism began to develop. Milton, said Blake, was of the devil's party whether he knew it or not ; Satan is the Hero of *Paradise Lost.* The idea had been suggested as early as Dryden, though not so vividly expressed as by the later writers. It is easy to understand why such an interpretation would appeal to Romanticists, rebels in various ways, who sympathized with the fact that Milton, too, had been a rebel, allying himself with the party that put a king to death. It is probably true that Milton's position in regard to the authority of kingship made him more capable of understanding the First Great Rebel than a cavalier might have been, but we must constantly be on guard against over-reading any author's biography or personal character into his works. Whether Shakespeare was Hamlet or not, he was certainly not always and not only Hamlet. The "Satanists" did not prove Satan the hero of *Paradise Lost.*

The moral degeneration of Satan is suggested in part by Milton's subtle changes in figures of light and darkness. When he was an angel in Heaven, Satan, like God and the other angels, had been clothed in light. Even in the early scenes in which he is still majestic ; he is losing some of his original brightness. Watch this in the scene in which having aroused his followers, the great commander brings his fallen army to order, and review them, as a general his troops. (1587-1619). We never feel the contrast between what he was and what he is permitting himself to become more than in this poignant scene. In the later books, as Satan deliberately continues to choose evil rather than good, light gives way more and more to darkness.

—(*M. H. Nicolson*)

5. The Character of Satan

At the beginning of the poem Milton gives us an outline the base, the heroic, the awful, the splendid, the insantly presumptuous figure of 'Him ....who durst defie th' Omnipotent Arms'. The greatest of English critics, Coleridge, saw at once the true analogy for Satan in the great conquerors of history.

That character of Satan is pride and sensual indulgence, finding in self the sole motive of action. It is the character so often seen in life on the political stage. It exhibits all the restlessness, temerity, and cunning which have marked the mighty hunters of mankind from Nimbrod to Napoleon. The common fascination of men is, that these great men, as they are called, must act from some great motive. Milton has carefully marked in his Satan the intense selfishness, the alcohol of egotism, which would rather reign in hell than serve in heaven. To place this just of self in opposition to denial of self or duty, and to show what exertions it would make, and what pains endure to accomplish its end, is Milton's particular object in the character of Satan. But around this character he has thrown a singularity of daring, a grandeur of sufferance, and a ruined splendour, which constitute the height of poetic sublimity. This height of poetic sublimity is achieved in Satan's first speech, perhaps the greatest expression in our literature of a virtue that must always command awe and admiration : fortitude in adversity, courage when there is no longer hope, Milton does not hesitate to allow to Satan a full measure of the grandest of all virtues courage of preservance, the root virtue without which no other virtue can flourish. That it is courage and, perseverance in a bad cause, a kind of madness, does not make it any the less courage. As Keats wrote : "Though a quarrel in the Streets is a thing to be hated, the energies displayed in it are fine ; the commonest Man shows a grace in his quarrel—By a superior being our reasoning; may take the same tone—though erroneous they may be fine—This is the very thing in which consists poetry."

So Satan's archangelic strength and resolution are 'fine', and the taunts by which he arouses his dispirited followers, culminating in the superb :

Awake, arise, or be for ever fallen

must always arouse the thrilled response that supreme courage evokes.

Milton could afford to present Satan grandly, and allow us to admire his virtues, because he is doomed. We know from the beginning that he must fail. If we were allowed to think for a moment that Satan might succeed, our feelings would be different ; and Milton's treatment would have had to be different too, if he could not rely upon our recognition throughout that Satan is our 'Grand Foe' as well as God's. He can give him all the splendour and tragic beauty of an archangel ruined, as he can make him the most beautiful of all serpents. He can put into his mouth the most seductive and impassioned arguments, eloquently shaped and phrased as if by 'som Oratour renound in Athens or free Rome." He need deny him no gifts, except the one gift : the power to love, that is to wish good to another being than himself. —(*Miss Helen Gardener*).

6. The Hero of Paradise Lost

Satan's opening speech to Beelzebub is magnificent setpiece, beginning with the broken candences of elegy—

If thou beest he ; But O how fall'n how chang'd ?—and rising to vain glorious defiance. But what remantic critics of Milton have failed to notice is that there is irony throughout which continually reduces Satan's stature even when it superficially seems that it is being built up. Satan exclaims :

Yet not for those
Nor what the Potent Victor in this rage
Call else inflict do I repent or change,
Though chang'd in outward lustre, that fixt mind
And high disdain, from sense of injured merit.

He will not 'repent or change', he boasts, associating repentance with change and proud of his constancy. But he has already changed and is changing before our eyes. We saw him first as 'the infernal serpent,' so that we already know him in a changed form. Indeed, in order to accomplish his purpose with Eve he had to change. The whole poem is, among other things, the story of his inevitable degeneracy, the result of obstinacy in evil. His state of mind, which he is so sure will remain the same, will move from rebellion to defiance, to stupid and petty self-frustration, and the process is going on even as he speaks. Further, the histrionics of high disdain, and 'sense of injured merit' have a faint overtone of the ludicrous. There is something weak and childish in a character's asserting to others that he is full of high disdain and has a sense of injured merit. And indeed what does that fine sounding phrase 'sense of injured merit' mean but simply 'Not fair' which nobody has ever considered to be a heroic cry ? But the speech rises to something more impressive :

> What though the field be lost ?
> All is not lost ; the unconquerable will,
> And study of revenge, immortal hate,
> And courage never to submit or yield ;
> And what is else not to be overcome ?

This is high rhetoric, and it goes with a swing. We do not at first notice the barrenness, the negative quality, of the line :

> And study of revenge, immortal hate,

which suggests no action at all but simply brooding on revenge and hate.
—(*David Daiches*).

7. Milton's Versification

Milton's blank verse has been described by another scholar poet, Robert Bridges, and to his account I refer the readers for the modulation that the poet allows himself to make on the pattern of the decasyllabic line. They are of two main kinds. By the dropping of stresses and by the admission of certain forms trisyllabic foot, the pace is quickened ; and then the effect is one of ease and lightness :

> 'Of Bacchus and his revellers, the race.'
> 'Winged with red lighting and impetuous rage.'
> 'Some natural tears they dropt but wiped them soon.'

By the doubling of stresses in the foot, or by their displacement ('inversion'), the pace is retarted ; and the effect is then one of strength and emphasis :

> 'For Hot, Cold, Moist, and Dry, four champions fierce'.
> 'Deliberate valour breathed, firm and unmoved.'
> 'Universal reproach, for worse to bear.'

There is many other refinement ; but if we pass from the single line to the period ; or 'paragraph' as Masson terms it, it is plain atonce how Milton's peculiar grammar lends itself to an ever changing variety of pause, and hence to the no less varied overflow of sense from verse to verse ; as is evident in the passage just quoted, "So thick the aery crowd', and indeed on every page. But all this variety ends in unity ; and to realise Milton's almost infallible art in comcerting a period of verse, the best way is to read one aloud avoiding any temptation to chant it, and paying special heed to the last line. For if that go wrong, all is lost ; and it is just there that Milton is most secure, and his imitators are most apt to break down. Consider, for instance, the virtue, not as a single unit, but as a final, of each of the following :

'Gorgons, and Hydras, and chimeras dire.' (ii. 628).
'Murmuring ; and with him fled the shades of night.'
'And Eden raised in the waste wilderness'. —(*Oliver Elton*).

8. Milton's Grand Style

It is, however, necessary to read a different view of Milton's grand style according to which though there are sublime passages in the first two books, in rest of the poem, the great poet lost touch with the life and variety of the spoken language. In the words of H. Coombes, "Now it would be quite mistaken to stigmatise the Grand Style as inevitably pretentious, and to make a rigid identification of the 'natural' in writing with the genuine. Sometimes what looks like an unnatural way of writing is found to be the writer's most forceful and most 'natural' way of expressing himself. In the opening books of *Paradise Lost* there is powerful writing of the heightened 'sublime' style ; this occurs where Milton has a theme and characters that engage his imagination. But when he is present in the poetry more as self-conscious moralist and preacher, the poetry loses much of its fine vigour. Passages, like the following, it is from Book VIII—are characteristics of parts of the later books of *Paradise Lost.*

Great thing, and full of wonder in our years
Far differing from this World, thou hast revealed,
Divine Interpreter ? by favour sent
Down from the Empyrean to forewarn
Us timely of what might else have been our loss
Unknown, which human knowledge could not reach :
For which to the infinitely Good we owe
Immortal thanks, and his admonishment
Receive with solemn purpose to observe
Immutably his sovran will.

and it continues with words like innumerable, ambient, interfused. Most moderately sensitive readers will probably find this language stilted and too obviously aiming at a solemn impressiveness. Even when we take into account the seriousness of Milton's pre-occupation with his religious theme, the strongest impression we have here is that of the monotonous solemnity of the language. The pages of *Paradise Lost* have a very large number of words like circumfused, insensate, immutable, obdurate, unquenchable, invariable, inaccessible, omnipotence, corporeal. Keat went so far as to say that *Paradise Lost* though 'so fine in itself' was a 'corruption of our language'. To whatever extent we agree or disagree with this, it is fair enough to say that in deliberately setting out to achieve a Grand Style. Milton lost touch with the life and variety of the spoken languge, and so was in danger of becoming heavily inert and abstract in those places where his subject did not 'take fire' from his imagination. As an accomplished scholar, he was no doubt more aware of the 'physical implications' of his polysyllables than, we his reader, are! but as poet he does not always make us feel the particular quality of his words. It could probably be demonstrated that the finest poetry of Milton occurs when he is least conscious of the ancient languages. —(*Compton-Rickett*).

9. Milton's Personality in Paradise Lost

It has to be noted that some of the most famous poets and critics of the Roman Age, both in England and Germany, were acutely aware of Milton's personality in 'Paradise Lost'. "Just as Coleridge stressed the subjectivity of 'Paradise Lost', remarking that in all modern poetry in Christendom there is an under-consciousness of a singular nature, a fleeting aways of external things, the mind or subject greater than the object, the reflective character predominant, "Schiller wrote to Goethe : "In this poem too, as with all modern works of art, it is really the individual manifested in it that arouses our interest. The topic is abominable outwardly plausible, but inwardly worm-eaten and hollow......But certainly it is an interesting man who speaks......Indeed, the strange, unique case that, as a revolutionary comes to grief, he (Milton) is better able to assume the role of the devil that of the angel, has a great influence upon the characterization and structure of the poem, as the circumstance of the author's blindness has upon its tone and colouring."

—(*Frank Kermode*).

10. Human Interest in Paradise Lost

He would have been happier to see Adam and Eve really working in that garden, not merely trimming its luxuriant abundance for lack of anything better to do—for lack of imperfections to remedy and evils to struggle against. Though he succeeds in giving magnificent expression to the state of innocent dignity in which Adam and Eve lived before the Fall, he is unable to make their daily life convincing, because he cannot really believe in it. As Rose Macaulay once remarked, "if Milton had been in Adam's place he would have eaten up the forbidden tree and then written a pamphlet to prove that his act was right and necessary." —(*David Daiches*).

11. The Theme and Modern Appeal of Paradise Lost

The evolution of Milton's thought and feeling, the deepening of his spiritual insight, makes him very much our contemporary. if he were as actively present our minds as he should have been pointing to the megalomaniac Satan and his destructive energy as a superlative prophetic picture of the world conquerors of our time. The word "prophetic" is not used, to be sure in a literal sense ; but neither is the parallel merely fortuitous. For the traditional motives which, with Milton's special colouring and emphasis, led to the sin of Satan and Adam and Eve, are essential motives which have been seen at the root of the sickness of our civilization. One could not begin to catalogue the modern authors, not only philosophic but semi-popular, who have been analyzing the rise and the down-fall of the so-called "Renaissance man" (The term "Renaissance" in this connection is, I think, partly a misnomer, because the central Renaissance tradition was predominantly Christian, but there is no doubt concerning the rebellious mentality and movement so designated, that is, secular, self-sufficient, optimistic "liberalism"). These modern authors, looking back from the present chaos over the last three centuries, have, like Milton, seen man's undoing in his irreligious human pride. It was Milton's own age and advanced minds in Europe generally, even if not irreligion themselves, made the first thorough break with the religious world view and religious ethics of the Middle Ages and antiquity and inaugurated the scientific naturalism and scientific bybris of modern times. Milton's own career might be called a partial epitome of that long cycle : if he began with a measure of "humanistic" self-sufficiency, he ended with repudiating it. In *Paradise Lost*, setting fundamental motives in the clear relief on an ancient author, Milton showed the will to power, public and private, intellectual presumption, and egoistic desire, seeking their ends through force and fraud and overthrowing the divine and natural order in the world and in the soul. He surveyed a world going through pride to destruction and issued a serious call to a devout and holy life.

The same words, however, inadequate for both poems, might be used of *The Waste Land*, the nearest thing we have to a modern *Paradise Lost*. And are not those critics who dismiss Milton's purpose and theme and substances inclined to demand more of him than they do of others poets ? Has no *The Wast Land*, with all the advantages of contemporaneity suffered much the same fat as *Paradise Lost* ? We are thrilled by its magical phrases and rhythms, we track down the sources of illusions, and we place the work in the poet's religious development, but has it actually counted very much in our own ? Has it in the least shaken our natural pride and led us to repentance, or does any critic call it a failure because it has not ? and is not its, "message" as much "out of date" as Milton's ? But Mr. Eliot, except as a technician, stands apart from the modern movement, and the modern temper has been formed largely by writers who have attained a foggy pinnacle beyond good and evil. That is one prime reason for reading Milton. We need the shock of encountering a poet to whom good and evil are distinct realities, a poet who has a much tried but invincible belief in a divine order and in man's divine heritage and responsibility who sees in human life and eternal contest between irreligious pride and religious humility.

—(*Douglas Bush*).

12. The Use of Blank Verse in Paradise Lost

I have been reading the *Paradise Lost*, I can take up no other poet with satisfaction. I seem to have left the music of Handel for the music of the streets, or at best for drums and files. Although in

Shakespeare there are occasional bursts of harmony no less sublime, yet, if there were many such in continuation, it would be hurtful, not only in comedy, but also in tragedy. In our English heroic verse such as Milton has composed it, there is a much greater variety of feet, of movement, of musical notes and bars, than in the Greek heroic ; and the final sounds are incomparably more diversified. My predilection in youth was on the side of Homer ; for I had read the *Illiad* twice, and the *odyssey* once, before the *Paradise Lost*. Averse as I am to everything relating to theology, and especially to the view of it thrown open by this poem, I recur to it incessantly as the noblest specimen in the world of eloquence, harmony, and genius.

(*W. S. Landor*)

13. The Classical and Hebraic Elements in Paradise Lost

"In *Paradise Lost* we find all the familiar features of the epic such as war, single combate, perilous journey's beautiful gardens, marvellous buildings, visions of the world and of the future, exposition of the structure of the universe, and scenes in Heaven and in Hell. Yes all these are so transformed that their significance and even their aesthetic appeal are new. The reason is that Milton has grafted his epic manner on to a subject which lies outside the main epic tradition. By finding his subject in the Bible he had to tradition far removed from Virgil. Before him the best literary epic had been predominantly secular, he made it theological, and the charge of approach meant a great change of temper and of atmosphere. The old themes are introduced in all their traditional dignity, but in Milton's hands they take on different significance and contribute to a different end."

The real conflict in Milton was between the Puritan and the Humanist. As a Puritan he believed that nothing was good except in so far as it carried out the will of God ; his conception of goodness was strictly ethical. But as a Humanist he felt that many things are good in themselves without reference to theology or morals. In his love of reason, of nature of music, physical beauty, of poetry, of knowledge, of all the intellectual delights which he found in books or in the world, he showed himself a true Humanist. Though he was deeply impressed by the fallen state of man and the wickedness of the world, he refused to believe that man was obsolutely corrupt and that all his activities were wrong. Just as Eramus and his fellow humanist believed that many ordinary human instincts and desires might well be good in themselves, so Milton could not in practice keep from feeling that there was good in men which bore little relation to the service of God......Before that he wrote *Paradise Lost* and put into it two sides of his nature, the Puritan and the Humanist, and the combination is responsible for some of its best qualities and for much of its fame." (*C. M. Bowra*).

14. Fusion of the Puritanical and the Humanist Elements in Paradise Lost

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Humanist. As a Puritan he believed that nothing was good except in so far as it carried out the will of God ; his conception of goddess was strictly ethical. But as a Humanist he felt that many things are good in themselves without reference to theology or morals. In this love of reason, of nature, of music, of physical beauty, of poetry, of knowledge, of all the intellectual delights which he found in books or in the world, he showed himself a true Humanist. Though he was deeply impressed by the fallen state of man and the wickedness of the world, he refused to believe that man was absolutely corrupt and that all his activities were wrong. Just as Erasmus and his fellow Humanist believed that many ordinary human instincts and desires might well be good in themselves, so Milton could not in practice keep from feeling that there was much good in men which bore little relation to the service of God......Before that he wrote *Paradise Lost* and put it into the two sides of his nature—the Puritan and the Humanist—and the combination is responsible for some of its best qualities and for much of its fame.

15. The Musical Felicity of Paradise Lost

The rhythms of *Paradise Lost* are simultaneously rapt with feeling and, as Arnold Stein says, "an integral part of the high unwavering illusion of mystical motionlessness." We may inspect another passage to see how this rhythmic intussuception arrives at its breathless leap (Eliot) of "no middle fight" (Milton) :

> Him th' Almighty Power
> Hurl'd head long flaming from th' Ethereal Skie
> With hideous ruine and combustion down
> To bottomless perdition, there to dwell
> In admantine Chains and penal Fire
> Who durst defie th' Omnipotent to Arms,
> Nine times the space that measures Day and Night
> To mortal men, he with horried crew
> Lay vanquisht, rowling in the fiery Gulfe
> Confounded though immortal.

"Now first thing to notice," Rajan says of this passage, "is its preponderance of stock epithets. 'Hideous' does not limit the suggestions of 'ruine' and 'penal' does little to control our reaction to 'Fire'. Perdition has always been 'bottomless' and chains in poetry are usually 'Adamantine'. The associations of these words moreover are not developed but accumulated. 'Fire' 'Combustion,' 'flaming' and in this context 'perdition' all suggest much the same thing and a similar grouping can be made of 'ethereal', 'down', bottomless', and 'headlong." And Rajan goes on to notice that there is repetition of *m* and *n* sounds, often in conjunction with *l* and *O* which "convey irresistably the terror of Satan's downfall." We might add that this "terror" which Rajan hears in the phonems, the terror of the distance, the (plastic and infinite) measure of the fall, also gets into the tone of the poetry's sound through the strength of each primary accent, because these accents are not levelled off as in

French, but are each successively primary. The head long rush is the more precinitate for the dominance of the accention "head long" while the word is being spoken and the equally dominant accent on "ethereal" which so to speak, keeps the sky aloft, tonally and geographically, and produces a kind of leaped gap of sound in which the word "flaming", equally accented, can blaze the more by being set, in wrenched sound as in visual image, against the "ethereal sky."
—(*Arthur E. Barker*).

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PARADISE LOST, BOOK ONE

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1. **Text with Paraphsase**
2. **Annotations**
3. **Model Explanations**
4. **Questions and Answers**

PARADISE LOST (TEXT)

BOOK I

Of Man's first disobedience, and the fruit
Of that forbidden tree, whose *mortal*[1] taste
Brought Death into the world, and all our woe
With loss of Eden, till one greater Man
Restore us, and regain the *blissful seat*[2],
Sing Heavenly Muse, that, on the *secret*[3] top
Of *Oreb, or of Sinai.*[4] didst inspire
That *shpeherd*[5] who first taught the *chosen seed*[6]
In the beginning how the Heavens and Earth
Rose out of *Chaos*[7] *or, if Sion hill*[8]
Delight thee more, and *Siloa's*[9] brook that flow'd
Fast the *oracle of God*[10], I thence
Invoke thy aid to my adventurous song,
That with no *middle*[11] flight intends to soar
Above the *Aonian mount*[12], while it pursues
Things unattempted yet in prose or rhyme.
And chiefly Thou, O Spirit, that dost prefer
Before all temples the upright heart and pure.
Instruct me, for Thou know'st : Thou from the first
Wast present, and with mighty wings outspread.
Dove-like sat'st brooding on the *vast abyss*[13]
And mad'st it pregnant : what in me is dark
Illumine, what is low raise and support ;
That to the highth of great *argument*[14]
I may assert *Eternal providence*[15]
And justify the ways of God to men.

Say first, for Heaven hides nothing from thy view
Nor the deep tract of Hell, say first what cause
Moved our *grand parents*[16] in that *happy state*[17]
Favoured of Heaven so highly, to fall off
From their Creator, and *tansgress*[18] his will

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1. Deadly 2. Paradise 3. Separate 4. Horeb and Sinai—two peaks of the same mountain range 5. Moses 6. Israelites 7. Primordial matter 8. The temple stands on Sion in Jerusalem 9. A river dividing Sion from Moriah 10. The holy of Holies 11. Middling ; mediocre 12. Helicon. 13. Chaos 14. Subject 15. Love and wisdom 16. Ancestors of mankind 17. State of happiness and innocence 18. Violate.

PARADISE LOST (PARAPHRASE)

BOOK I

O, Heavenly Muse, inspire me that I may sing of Man's first act of disobedience to God in eating the fruit of Tree of Knowledge, forbidden by God, which brought death into the world and all our misery with loss of Eden (the state of happiness and innocence) until Christ should redeem us from sin, and restore back for us Paradise. It were you who inspired Moses on the secluded top of the mountain Horeb or of Sinia who taught the God's favourites, the Israelites how heaved earth were created out of chaos. Or if you perfer Sion hill (in Jerusalem) and the river Siloa which flows by the Temple of Jerusalem, I pray for your aid from there for my success in my poetic effort, for I have a more ambitious aim in my song than that of ancient poets ; I am going to attempt a great theme not undertaken by any author earlier either in prose or in verse. Chiefly I call upon you, O, Spirit of God, for you prefer to dwell rather in a just and blameless hearts than temples.

I pray you to guide me, for you know everything. Nothing is hidden for you, for you were present from the beginning, and sat like a dove with wings expanded on the limitless void of Chaos, and quickened it with life. Dispel all that is dark in me, elevate all that is low in me so that I may rise to the loftiness of my great subject, and I may prove the wisdom of God's government and justify his action to men.

With your aid, let me tell first—for you know whatever there is in Heaven or in the deep abyss of Hell—what causeimpelled our ancestors, living in that blessed state and enjoying the great favour of their Creator, to be disloyal to Him and violate His command,

For[1] one restraint, lords of the world besides.
Who first *seduced*[2] them to that foul revolt ?

The *infernal*[3] Serpent ; he it was, whose guile,
Stirred up with envy and revenge, deceived
The Mother of Mankind, what time his pride
Had cast him out from Heaven, with all his host
Of rebel Angels, by whose aid, aspiring
To set himself in *glory*[4] above his peers,
He trusted to have equalled the Most High,
If he opposed ; and, with ambitious aim
Against the throne and monarchy of God,
Raised impious war in Heaven and battle proud,
With vain attempt. Him the Almighty Power
Hurled headlong *flaming*[5] from the *etheral*[6] sky,
With hideous *ruin*[7] and combustion, down.
To bottomless *perdition*[8] there to dwell
In *adamantine*[9] chains and *penal fire*,[10]
Who durst defy the Omnipotent to arms.

Nine times the space that measures day and night
To mortal men, he with his horrid crew
Lay vanquished rolling in the fiery gulf,
Confounded[11] though immortal. But his doom
Reserved him to more wrath, for now the thought
Both of lost happiness and lasting pain
Torments him, round he throws his *baleful*[12] eyes
That *witnessed*[13] huge affliction and dismay
Mixed with *obdurate*[14] pride and steadfast hate.
At once as far as Angle's *Ken*[15] he views
The dismal *situation*[16] waste and wild :
A dungeon horrible on all sides round
As one great furnance flamed ; yet from those flames
No light, but rather *darkness visible*[17]
Served only to *discover*[18] sights of woe,
Regions of sorrow, *doleful*[19] shades where peace
And rest can never dwell, hope never comes
That comes to all : but torture without end
Still *urges*[20], and fiery deluge, fed
With ever burning sulphur unconsumed.
Such place Eternal Justice had prepared
For those rebellious, here their prison ordained

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1. Because of 2. Tempted. 3. Hellish 4. Seat of glory 5. In a track of flame 6. Made of pure air 7. Downfall 8. Hell 9. Unbreakable 10. Suffering in fire 11. Confounded 12. Sorrowful or mischievous 13. Bore witness to 14. Unyielding 15. Vision 16. Site 17. Darkness in which objects are dimly visible 18. Disclose 19. Miserable 20. Drive.

for He had left them absolute possessors of the whole world except for that one restriction of not eating the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge—and also tell who tempted them to that base act of disobedience.

It was Satan (the serpent from hell). It was, he whose treachery, excited by envy on account of God's favour to mankind, and revenge (for his overthrow) deceived Eve, the mother of mankind. This he did after he had been cast out from heaven for his pride, with all the multitude of rebel angles with whose help he expected to raise himself to the position of God. With this end in view, he challenged the the sovereignty of God, and started an unholy war in heaven which led to his defeat. God threw him down from heaven with head downward and he fell in a flaming track (pursued by thunder) into the fathomless abyss of hell, never again to rise to heaven. He was to dwell there for ever, bound in unbreakable chains and tormented by fire, for having dared to rise against the Almighty God.

Satan and his dreadful companions continued falling for nine days and nights as may be reckoned in the counting of man, now they lay rolling in the lake of fire in hell. Though immortal, they lay quite stunned in that lake of fire. But Satan was destined to still greater punishment. For now he is most tormented by the memory of happiness he has already lost and by the eternal agony, inflicted on him in hell. He casts his sorrowful eyes around which bear witness to his own misery and woe mingled with unyielding pride and undying hate. As far as an angel's eye can see, he observes the dreary site—a wild and desolate region. It seems to be a horrible dungeon, burning like a great furnace. Yet the flames emit no light ; a phantasmal gloom reveals spectacles of misery, abodes of sorrow, and miserable shadows, with which peace and contentment cannot be associated, where hope that comes to all—even to the hopeless, does not bless anybody here.

It is a place of unending torment—a river of fire, kept alive by an inexhaustible supply of sulphur. God who is the fountain-head of justice had prepared such a place for the rebellious angles. He had fixed their prison in this perpetual

In *utter*[1] darkness, and their *portion*[2] set
As far removed from God and light of Heaven
As from the *centre*[3] thrice to the *utmost*[4] pole.
Oh how unlike the place from whence they fell
There the companions of his fall, overwhelmed
With floods and whirlwinds of tempestuous fire,
He soon discerns, and, *weltering*[5] by his side
One next himself in power, and next in crime,
Long after known in Palestine, and named
Beelzebub. To whom the Arch-Enemy,
And thence in Heaven called Satan, with bold words
Breaking the horrid silence thus began :

If thou beest he—but Oh how fallen ! how changed
From him ! who, in the *happy realms of light*[6]
Clothed with *transcendent*[7] brightness didst outshine
Myriads, though bright ! if he whom *mutual league*[8]
United thoughts and counsels, equal hope
And hazard in the glorious enterprise,
Joined with me once now misery hath joined
In equal ruin : into what pit thou seest
From what highth fallen ; so much the stronger proved
He with his thunder ; and till then who knew
The force of those *dire arms*[9] ? Yet not for those,
Nor what the potent Victor in his rage
Can else inflict, do I repent, or change,
Though changed in outward lustre, that fixed mind,
And high disdain from sense of *injured merit*[10],
That with the Mightiest raised me to contend
And to the fierce *contention*[11] brought along
Innumerable force of Spirits armed.
That durst dislike his reign, and, me preferring,
His utmost power with *Adverse*[12] power opposed
In *dubious*[13] battle on the plains of Heaven,
And shook his throne. What though the field be lost ?
All is not lost : the unconquerable will,
And *study*[14] of revenge, immortal hate.
And courage never to submit or yield :
And what is else not to be overcome ?
That glory never shall his wrath or might
Extort[15] from me. To bow and sue for *grace*[16]
With *suppliant*[17] knee, and deify his power,
Who, from the terror of this arm, so late
Doubted his empire,—that were low indeed ;
That were an *ignominy*[18] and shame beneath

1. Outer 2. Destiny 3. The Earth 4. Outermost 5. Rolling 6. Heaven 7. Supreme 8. Close association 9. Thunder 10. Wronged dignity 11. Strife 12. Hostile 13. Doubtful 14. Endeavour 15. Enforce 16. Mercy 17. Bent 18. Humiliation.

gloom and decreed that they must suffer there. They were as far removed from God and heaven as thrice the distance between the earth and the point on which turns the outermost sphere.

How different is this place from heaven from which they had fallen ! He soon discovers his companions who have fallen with him. They lie confounded in the flood and tempest of fire. He discovers one rolling by his side. He was next to Satan in power as also in crime. Later, he was known in Palestine by the name of Beelzebub. To him the principal enemy, henceforth called Satan in Heaven, speaks in his bold words breaking the deadly silence of hell.

"I doubt whether you are the same Beelzebub, my most powerful comrade—Oh ! how beaten and overthrown you look ! How fallen from your glory !—who once eclipsed multitudes ! of angels wrapped in brightness in heaven—that blessed region on light ! I doubt whether it is you whom close association, unity of purpose and thought, equal hope of success and equal risk of failure joined with me once, and whom misery has now joined in equal defeat. You see from what a height to what a depth you have fallen ! God's superiority over us is to be measured by the depravity and depth of our fall, secured as it is by His thunder. But until we faced our defeat, who could have measured the power of His thunder ? But I do not repent what has happened to us, or what else the powerful Victor might yet inflict on us in His wrath. And now though my physical brightness is partly dimmed, I cannot give up my resolve and my proud contempt arising from the great sense of injustice which urged me to challenge the Almighty, and to rally round me a large body of angels who disliked this tyranny and chose me as their leader and waged doubtful war in Heaven and shook His throne. It does not matter much if we have lost the battle.

We have not lost our unshakable determination. We still burn with presistent desire to take revenge and nourish undying hate ; we still possess unyielding courage and what else is not to be wrested from us and beaten down—our imperishable essence. His vengeance or His power cannot rob me of the glory of my personal identity. It would be base indeed to submit to Him and pray for His forgiveness on bended knees and worship his power, for lately His throne was shaken by the strength of my arm. It would indeed be a disgrace and humiliation worse than our defeat.

This downfall ; since, by fate, the strength of Gods
And this *empyreal*[1] *substance*[2] cannot fail ;
Since, through experience of this great event,
In arms not worse, in foresight much advanced.
We may with more *successful hope*[3] resolve
To wage by force or guile eternal war,
Irreconcilable to our grand Foe
Who now triumphs, and in excess of joy
Sole reigning holds the tyranny of Heaven."

So spake the *apostate*[4] Angel, though in pain
Vaunting aloud, but *racked*[5] with deep despair ;
And him thus answered soon his bold *compeer*[6].

"O Prince, O Chief of many *throned*[7] Powers,
That led the *embattled*[8] Seraphim to war
Under thy conduct, and dreadful deeds,
Fearless, endangered Heaven's perpetual King,
And *put to proof*[9] his high supremacy,
Whether upheld by strenth, or chance, or Fate !
Too well I see and *rue*[10] the dire *event*[11],
That with sad overthrow and foul defeat
Hath lost us Heaven, and all this mighty host
In horrible destruction laid thus low.
As far as Gods and *Heavenly essences*[12]
Can perish ! for the mind and spirit remains
Invincible, and vigour soon returns,
Though all our glory extinct, and happy state
Here *swallowed up*[13] in endless misery.
But what if He our Conqueror (whom I now
Of force believe almighty, since no less
Than such could have o'erpowered such force as ours)
Have left us this our spirit and strength entire,
Strongly to suffer and *support*[14] our pains,
That we may so suffice his vengeful *ire*[15] ;
Or do him mightier service as his *thralls*[16]
By right of war, whate'er his business be,
Here in the heart of Hell to work in fire.
Or do his errands in the gloomy *Deep*[17] ?
What can it then avail though yet we feel
Strength undiminished, of eternal being
To undergo eternal punishment ?"

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1. Ethereal **2.** Essence **3.** Hope of success **4.** Fallen from his loyalty **5.** Tortured **6.** Companion **7.** Seated on thrones **8.** Drawn up in battle order **9.** Tested **10.** Lament **11.** Result **12.** Ethereal substance **13.** Merged **14.** Endure **15.** Anger **16.** Slaves **17.** Chaos.

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since it is decreed by fate that our strength and ethereal essence cannot perish. Since our late experience shows that we are not inferior in physical strength, but we are superior in wisdom, we may resolve, with greater hope of success, to carry on unending hostilities either by force or by treachery. We will never be reconciled to our mighty enemy, who now exults in victory, and in his unbounded joy, reigns as the unchallenged tyrant of heaven."

Thus spoke the fallen angel. Though tortured with pain, he boasted loudly, while he was a prey to deep despondency. His bold comrade soon answered him thus :

"O Prince, O Captain of the angelic host who led the higher angels to battle, and shook the throne of heaven's long-reigning king by your terrific valour, and challenged his power and authority, which he owed either to superior strength or to chance or to destiny I realize and regretfully mourn the painful result. We have not only been overthrown and defeated, but we have lost heaven, and all those numerous angels have been laid low in destruction, so far as immortal being can suffer destruction ; for the mind and spirit remain unconquerable and our strength we soon recover ; though our glory (physical lustre) is dimmed, and our happiness is merged into unending misery here in this abyss. But I fear whether our Victor (for I now must regard him as Almighty, since none but an Almighty-being could have defeated such assembled force as ours) has left in us unconquerable spirit and strength undiminished that we may suffer and endure unending pain till we satisfy His wrath or that by right of conquest. He may employ us as slaves in whatever tasks may please Him—here in the depth of hell to work in fire or to do whatever business He may assign to us. He may lay us in the eternal darkness of chaos. What good is then to us our strength unfailing of immortal nature but to go through unending torment ?"

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Whereto with speedy words the Arch-Fiend replied
"Fallen Cherub, to be weak is miserable,
Doing or suffering ; but of this be sure,
To do aught good never will be our task,
But ever to do ill our sole delight.
As being the contrary to His high will
Whom we resist. If then his *providence*[1]
Out of our evil seek to bring forth good,
Our labour must be to *pervert*[2] that end.
And out of good still to find means of evil ;
Which oft-times may succeed, so as perhaps
Shall grieve him, if I *fail*[3] not, and disturb
His *inmost counsels*[4] from their destined *aim*[5]
But see ! the angry Victor hath recalled
His ministers of vengeance and pursuit
Back to the gates of Heaven : the *sulphurous hail*[6]
Shot after us in storm, *o'erblown*[7] hath *laid*[8]
The fiery surge that from precipice
Of Heaven received us falling ; and the thunder,
Winged with red lightning and impetuous rage,
Perhaps hath spent his shafts, and ceases now
To bellow through the vast and boundless deep.
Let us not *slip*[9] the occasion, whether scorn
Or *satiate*[10] fury yield it from our Foe.
Seest thou yon dreary plain, forlorn and wild,
The seat of desolation, void of light,
Save what the glimmering of these *livid*[11] flames
Casts pale and dreadful ? Thither let us tend
From off the tossing of these fiery waves ;
There rest, if any rest can *harbour*[12] there ;
And re-assembling our *afflicted powers*[13]
Consult how we may henceforth most offend
Our enemy, our own loss how repair,
How overcome this dire calamity,
What *reinforcement*[14] we may gain from hope,
If not, what resolution from despair."

Thus Satan, talking to his nearest mate
With head uplift above the wave, and eyes
That sparkling blazed ; his other parts besides
Prone[15] on the flood, extended long and large,
Lay floating many a rood ; in bulk as huge
As whom the fables name of monstrous size,
Titanian or Earth-born, that warred on Jove,

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1. Goodness or wisdom 2. Turn into evil. 3. Mistake 4. Secretly-conceived plans 5. Purpose 6. Shower of fiery substance 7. Exhausted 8. Calmed 9. Miss 10. Satisfied 11. Blue 12. Dwell 13. Beaten forces 14. Encouragement 15. Prostrate.

To this speech Satan quickly replied, "Fallen angel, weakness is the worst of lot whether in action or in suffering. Let me tell you—it shall never be our intention to do anything good ; our pleasure shall be to do evil or being opposed to the intention of our Victor to whom we are hostile. If then His goodness seeks to convert the evil we do into good, our endeavour shall be ever to reverse His purpose, and to invent evil out of good. In this way, we may often succeed in annoying him, if I mistake not, and thus divert his most cherished purpose from its intended end.

But look, wrathful victor has withdrawn his instruments of vengeance and pursuit. The discharge of thunder and flame that followed us as a tempest, is exhausted and the fiery waves that received us falling from the height of heaven, now lie quiet. The thunder, impelled by flashes of lighting and uncontrollable violence, has perhaps expired, and no more roars through the vault of chaos.

Let us not miss this opportunity, whether it is given us by our enemy out of contempt or appeased anger. You see that gloomy plain, abandoned and wild, the very home of misery and ruin, with no light except what dim light is cast by these dim flames. Let us proceed there from the restless lake, and there rest if any rest can be had in this place. Then summoning our beaten forces, let us consult how we may henceforth most annoy our enemy, compensate our losses, get the best out of our lamentable disaster and what strength we may draw from hope, and if none, what strength of purpose we may draw from despair."

Thus Satan spoke to his nearest comrade, with his head lifted above the waves, and eye that shone wildly, while the rest of his body lay prostrate on the lake ; it extended far, in size as large as any creature of abnormal shape mentioned in mythology, of the Titans race that fought with Jove—

Briareos[1] *or Typhon*[2] whom the *den*[3]
By ancient Tarsus held, or that sea-beast
Leviathan, which God of all his works
Created hugest that swim the *ocean stream.*[4]
Him, *haply*[5] slumbering on the Norway foam,
The pilot of some small *night-foundered*[6] skiff,
Deeming some island, oft as seamen tell,
With fixed anchor in his scaly rind.
Moors by his side *under the lee*[7], while night
Invests[8] the sea, and wished morn delays :
So stretched out huge in length the Arch-Fiend lay,
Chained on the burning lake : nor ever thence
Had risen, or heaved his head, but that the will
And high permission of all-ruling Heaven
Let him at large to his own *dark designs,*[9]
That with *reiterated*[10] crimes he might
Heap on himself damnation, while he sought
Evil to others, and enraged might see
How all his malice served but to bring forth
Infinite goodness, grace and mercy, shewn
On Man by him seduced ; but on himself
Treble confusion, wrath and vengeance poured.

Forthwith[11] upright he rears from off the pool
His mighty stature ; on each hand the flames
Driven backward *slope*[12] their pointing spires, and rolled
In billows, have i' the midst a horrid vale.
Then with expanded wings he steers his flight
Aloft, *incumbent,*[13] on the dusky air
That felt unusual weight, till on dry land
He lights— if it were land that ever burned
With solid, as the lake with liquid fire,
And such appeared in hue as when the force
Of *subterrenean*[14] wind transports a hill
Torn from *Pelorus*[15], or the shattered side
Of thundering Aetna, whose, combustible
And *fuelled*[16] entrails thence conceiving fire,
Sublimed[17] with mineral fury, aid the winds,
And leave a *singed*[18] bottom all *involved*[19]
With stench and smoke : such resting found the sole

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1. Took the side of Zeus against the Titans 2. Killed by Zeus with his thunderbolt 3. In Cilicia 4. Perpetually flowing river round the earth 5. Perhaps 6. Benighted 7. On the sheltered side 8. Envelops 9. Secret purposes 10. Repeated 11. At once 12. Bent. 13. Lying 14. Underground 15. Cepee Faro, the north-east corner of Sicily 16. Full of combustible material 17. Converted by heat into vapour and then condensed 18. Burnt 19. Enveloped.

Briareos (a monster with 100 hands and 50 heads) or Typhon (a monster with 100 serpent hands who dwelt in a den in Tarsus in Cilicia), or that sea-monster, Leviathan, the largest of all creatures that live in water. The latter is something mistaken by the steersman of some benighted vessel on the North Sea for an island as he sleeps (as the story of seamen goes) ; and it happens that the vessel is moored by his side, with the anchor fixed in his body, covered with fishy scales, on the sheltered side while night lasts and the expected dawn approaches slowly. Satan lay like the Leviathan, immeasurable in length, chained on the fiery lake.

He could not have risen from it or lifted his head, were it not for the permission of the lmighty. God left him free to pursue his wicked purpose so that with repeated crimes he might bring on himself worse punishment, for while he sought to do evil to others, he would see that the evil recoiled on him, involving the most terrible wrath and vengeance of God, and that at the same time his ill-will in seducing man, will ensure him greater love and kindness from God.

At once he lifts his vast body from the lake. The flames, being displaced on either side, rear their crests, and rolling backward, leave a yawning chasm in the midst. Then with outspread wings he soars up, resting on the gloomy air, which is burdened with his weight. Then he alights on dry land. It was hardly land which ever burned with solid fire, as the lake with liquid. It appeared ashes in colour as when a hill is uprooted from Pelorus (in Sicily by the wind that rages underground,) or when a fragment is torn from the bellowing Etna, whose interior generated heat in the combustible substances, aiding the winds and finally there appears a hollowed surface, burnt out and enveloped in the smell of gases and smoke. The feet of accursed Satan found such

Of unblest feet. Him followed his next mate.
Both glorying to have scaped the *Stygian*[1] flood
As gods, and by their own recovered strength.
Not by the *sufferance*[2] of *supernal*[3] power.

"Is this the region, this the soil, the clime,"
Said then the lost Archangel, "this the seat
That we must *change*[4] for Heaven ?—this mournful gloom
For that celestial light ? Be it so, since He
Who now is sovran can dispose and bid
What shall be right ; farthest from Him is best,
Whom reason hath equalled, force hath made supreme
Above his equals. Farewell, happy fields,
Where joy for ever dwells ! Hail, horrors ! hail,
Infernal World ! and thou, profoundest Hell.
Receive thy new possessor—one who brings
A mind not to be changed by place or time.
The mind *is its own place*[5] and in itself
Can make a Heaven of Hell, a Hell of Heaven.
What matter where, if I be still the same,
And what I should be, all but less than he
Whom thunder hath made greater ? Here at least
We shall be free ; the Almighty hath not built
Here *for his envy*[6], will not drive us hence :
Here we may reign *secure*[7] ; and in my choice
To reign is worth ambition though in Hell :
Better to reign in Hell, than serve in Heaven.

But wherefore let we then our faithful friends,
The associates and co-partners of our loss,
Lie thus *astonished*[8] on the *oblivious*[9] pool,
And call them not to share with us their part
In this unhappy mansion, or once more
With rallied arms to try what may be yet
Regained in Heaven, or what more lost in Hell ?"

So Satan spake ; and him Beelzebub
Thus answered—"Leader of those armies bright
Which, but the Omnipotent none could have *foiled*[10],
If once they hear that voice, their liveliest *pledge*[11]
Of hope in fears and dangers—heard so oft
In *worst extremes*[12], and on the *perilious edge*[13]
Of battle, when it raged, in all assualts
Their surest signal—they will soon resume
New courage and revive, though now they lie

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1. Of river 2. Permission 3. Heavenly 4. Exchange 5. Independent of circumstances 6. To make him grudge out possesion of it. 7. Free from care . Stunned 9. Causing forgetfulness 10. Defeated 11. Promise 12. Cries 13. Front line of battle.

painful ground. Beelzebub followed him there. Both were delighted and proud to have escaped from the lake of fire as they had the power of gods and had managed to escape by their own strength which they had lately recovered and not by the permission of heavenly power.

Satan mourned, "Is this the region, this the soil and climate, this the abode that we must have in place of Heaven —this dismal darkness exchanged for that heavenly radiance ? Let it be so, since He who is now supreme, can do as He pleases, and determine what should be proper for us. He is not superior to us in reason, though force has placed Him above us.

Farewell, blesed Heaven which is the abode of perpetual delight ! welcome Hell and the horrors of Hell ! Let Hell receive its new lord—one who brings a mind, not to be affected by circumstances or time. It can convert heaven into hell and hell into heaven. What does it matter where I am, so long as I am what I am (I do not lose my personal identity) ? I could not do less than he, were it not that thunder gave him superiority. Here in Hell we shall be at least free. The Almighty cannot certainly grudge us the possession of such a wretched place. He has provided for us, and will not expel us from here. Here we may reign without any fear. Moreover, I believe to reign is worthwhile though it be in Hell. It is better to reign in Hell than serve in Heaven.

But why do we let our faithful friends suffer, the partakers of our loss and defeat, to lie thus stupefied on the lake, causing forgetfulness in them, and why do we not summon them to share with us this wretched abode or once more with gathered force to embark on further hazards and see what we may yet reconquer of Heaven or what more losses we may sustain in Hell ?

Thus Satan spoke, and Beelzebub thus answered him— "Captain if the angelic host, whom none but the Almighty could have defeated, if once they hear your voice, which has always filled them with hope in the midst of danger—they have heard it so often in crises and in the vanguard of the army, and it led them in all attacks—they will soon summon up courage and start up, though now they lie

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Grovelling[1] and prostrate on yon lake of fire,
As we erewhile, *astounded*[2] and amazed ;
No wonder, fallen such a *pernicious*[3] highth !"

He scarce had ceased when the superior Fiend
Was moving towards the shore ; his *ponderous*[4] shield,
Ethereal temper[5], *massy*[6] large, and round,
Behind him cast. The broad circumference
Hung on his shoulders like the moon, whose orb
Through optic glass the *Tuscan artist*[7] views
At evening from the Top of *Fesole*[8],
Or in *Valdarno*[9], to descry new lands,
Rivers or mountains, in her spotty globe.
His spear—to equal which the tallest pine
Hewn on Norwegian hills, to be the mast
Of some great *ammiral*[10], were but a wand—
He walked with, to support uneasy steps
Over the burning *marle*[11] not like those steps
On Heaven's *azure*[12] ; and the *torrid*[13] clime
Smote on him sore besides, vaulted with fire.
Nathless[14] he so endured, till on the beach
Of that inflamed sea he stood, and called
His *legions*[15], Angel forms, who lay *entranced*[16]
Thick as autumnal leaves that strow the brooks
In *Vallombrosa*[17], where the Etruian shades
High over-arched embower ; or scattered sedge
Afloat when with fierce winds *Orion*[18] armed
Hath *vexed*[19] the Red-Sea coast, whose waves o'erthrew
Busiris[20] and *Memphian Chivalry*[21]
While with *petfidious*[22] hatred they pursued
The *sojourners of Goshen*[23], who beheld
From the safe shore their floating *carcases*[24]
And broken chariot-wheels. So thick bestrown,
Abject[25] and lost, lay these, covering the flood,
Under amazement of their hideous change.
He called so loud that all the hollow deep
Of Hell resounded. "Princes, Potentates,
Warriors, the flower of Heaven, once yours, now lost,
If such astonishment as this can seize
Eternal spirits : or have ye chosen this place
After the toil of battle to repose

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1. Wallowing 2. Overwhelmed 3. Calamitous 4. Heavy 5. Forged in heaven 6. Massive 7. Galileo 8. Hill, three miles north-west of Florence 9. Vale of Arno 10. Flag-ship 11. Soil 12. Blue surface 13. Burning 14. Nevertheless 15 Troops 16. Stupefied 17. Vale, eighteen miles east of Florence 18. Constellation 19. Agitated 20. Egyptian king 21. Egyptian cavalry 22. Treacherous 23. Israelites 24. Dead bodies 25. Cast down.

wallowing and prone on that lake of fire as we a little while ago lay confounded, no wonder, having fallen from such a calamitous height."

Scarcely had he stopped when Satan proceeded towards the shore. His unwieldy shield, forged in heaven—massive, large, and round—was hung behind him. Its round shape, hung on his shoulders like the moon, whose disc Galileo observes through the telescope from the top of Fesole in the evening or in the valley of Arno to discover new lands, rivers or mountains on the spotted surface of the moon. The tallest pine, cut down on the Norwegian hill to be shaped into a mast of some flag-ship, would be but a mere stick, compared to his spear. He walked with his spear to support his painful steps on the burning soil, no more pleasant to walk as on the blue surface of Heaven. The burning region, arched over with fire, scorched him painfully. Nevertheless, he bore it through, till he stood on the shore of the burning sea, and called his troops—angel forms, that lay confounded.

Thick as autumn leaves that litter the river in Vallombrosa where the Etrurian trees formed vaulted bowers, or thick as scattered sedges floating in the Red Sea, when the constellation Orion has stirred it up with storms—the Red Sea in which the Egyptian King, Busiris, and his horsemen were drowned while they treacherously followed the Israelites, while the Israelites, safe on the shore, witnessed this disaster as the sea floated their dead bodies and broke their chariot-wheels. Similarly, in a dense mass these angels, cast down and confounded, lay on the sea, and they seemed to be dazed by the disaster that had overtaken them.

Satan shouted so loudly that the empty vault of Hell reverberated, "Princes, powerful lords, warriors, the pick of the heavenly host ! once Heaven belonged to you, now it is gone from you ; I wonder if such amazement can ever assail immortal spirits ! or have you chosen this dismal place to rest your limbs after the hardship of battle ?

Your wearied *virtue*[1] ; for the case you find
To slumber here, as in the vales of Heaven ?
Or in this abject posture have ye sworn
To adore the conquerer, who now beholds
Cherub and Seraph rolling in the flood
With scattered arms and *ensigns*[2], till anon
His swift pursuers from Heaven-gates discern
The advantage, and descending, tread us down
Thus drooping, or with *linked*[3] thunderbolts
Transfix us to the bottom of this gulf ?
Awake, arise, or be for ever fallen !"

They heard and were abashed, and they sprung
Upon the wing, as when men *wont*[4] to watch,
On duty, sleeping found by whom they dread,
Rouse and *bestir themselves*[5] ere well awake.
Nor did they not perceive the evil plight
In which they were, or the fierce pains not feel ;
Yet to their General's voice they soon obeyed
Innumerable. As when the potent rod
Of *Amram's son*[6], in Egypt's evil day,
Waved round the coast, up called a pitchy cloud
Of locusts, *warping*[7] on the eastern wind,
That o'er the realm of impious *Pharaoh*[8] hung
Like night, and darkened all the land of Nile :
So numberless where those bad Angels seen
Hovering on wing under the *cope*[9] of Hell,
'Twixt upper, *nether*[10], and surrounding fires ;
Till as a signal given, the uplifted spear
Of their great Sultan waving to direct
Their course, in even *balance*[11] down they light
On the firm brimstone and fill all the plain ;
A multitude like which the populous North
Poured never from her frozen loins, to pass
Rhene[12] or the *Danaw*[13], when her *barbarous sons*[14]
Came like a deluge on the South, and spread
Beneath Gibralter to the *Libyan sands*[15].
Forthwith, from every *squadron*[16] and each band,
The heads and leaders thither haste where stood
Their great Commander—godlike shapes, and forms
Excelling human, princely dignities ;
And powers that *erst*[17] in Heaven sat on thrones.
Though of their names in Heavenly records now
Be no memorial, blotted out and rased

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1. Manhood 2. Standard 3. Connected by links 4. Accustomed 5. Be on the alert 6. Moses 7. Moving in the undulatory manner 8. King of Egypt 9. Vault 10. Lower 11. Poise 12. Rhine 13. Danube 14. Goths and Vandals 15. African desert 16. Division of troops 17. Formerly.

Perhaps you find it as comfortable to sleep here as in the valleys of Heaven ? Or, lying prone on the lake, have you vowed to worship your victor ? To him it is now a pleasure to see the Cherub and Seraph roll on the sea with their arms and standards scattered, till his ministers of vengeance see our abject condition from the gates of heaven, and coming down, crash us down, fainting as we are or with a chain of thunderbolts fasten us down to the bottom of this gulf. Awake from your trance, start up, otherwise remain for ever cast down like this."

They heard Satan's summons and were ashamed. They rose on their wings as quickly as sentinels, when caught napping by their superior officer, start up before they are fully awake. Nor were they insensible to their miserable condition or to the fierce torment which they endured ; yet they atonce responded to the summons of their leader in their multitudes. As when Moses, by waving his magic wand, called up a cloud-like swarm of locusts that came borne on the eastern wind, and spread like shadow over the kingdom of the wicked Pharaoh, darkening the land of the Nile, so innumerable were the fallen angels now seen up in the air, under the vault of Hell—and they spread through upper, lower and surrounding fires. Then at the signal given, they raised their spears to their captain waving to point the way, they alighted in order on the fiery soil and crowded all the plain.

Even the barbarians who descended from the barren north into the fertile plains of the south of Europe, crossing the Rhine or the Danube and spreading beyond Gibraltar to the African desert, were not so numerous as these fallen angels.

Atonce from every regiment and the company the leaders hastened where their great Commander stood. They were of angelic shapes, outshining human creatures. They were lords among angels who formerly sat on thrones in Heaven, thought their names now have been blotted out from

By their rebellion from the *Books of Life*[1]
Nor had they yet among the sons of Eve
Got them new names, till, wandering o'er the Earth.
Through God's high sufferance for the trial of Man,
By falsities and lies the greatest part
Of Mankind they corrupted to forsake
God, their Creator, and the invisible
Glory of him that made them to transform
Oft to the image of a brute, adorned
With *gay religions*[2] full of pomp and gold,
And devils to adore for deities.
Then were they known to man by various names,
And various idols through the heathen world.
Say, Muse, their names then known, who first, who last,
Roused from the slumber on the *fiery couch*[3]
At their great Emperor's call, as next in worth
Came singly where he stood on the bare *strand*[4],
While the *promiscuous*[5] crowd stood yet aloof
The chief were those, who, from the pit of Hell
Roaming to seek their prey on Earth, durst fix
Their seats, long after, next the seat of God.
Their altars by his alter, gods adored
Among the nations round, and drust *abide*[6]
Jehovah thundering out of Sion, throned
Between the Cherubim ; yea, often placed
Within his sanctuary itself their shrines,
Abominations[7] ; and with cursed things
His holy rites and solemn feasts *profaned*[8] ,
And with their darkness durst *affront*[9] his light.
First, *Moloch*[10], horrid king, besmeared with blood
Of human sacrifice and parents' tears,
Though, for the noise of drums and timbrels loud,
Their children's cries unheard that passed through fire
To his grim idol. Him the *Ammonite*[11]
Worshiped in Rabba and her watery plain,
In Argob an in Basan, to the stream
Of utmost Arnon. Nor content with such
Audacious[12] neighbourhood, the wisest heart
Of *Solomon*[13] he led by fraud to build
His temple right against the temple of God
On that *opprobrious*[14] *hill*[15], and made his grove
The pleasant valley o *Hinnom*[16], Tophet thence

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1. Contain the names of those who deserve God's grace 2. Rituals 3. Lake of fire 4. Shore 5. Undistinguished 6. Confront 7. Heathen idols 8. Desecrated 9. Confront 10. Cananite god 11. People who dwelt east of the Jordan 12. Daring 13. Third King of Israel, celebrated for wisdom 14. Offensive 15. Mount of Olives 16. South-east of Jerusalem.

heavenly records, nor do they appear in the Books of Life because of their rebellion. Nor had they yet received new names among mankind till roaming the earth by God's permission that they might test the virtue of Man, they corrupted the greatest part of Mankind with false shows of religion, the result that they forsook the true God, and worshipped the image of a brute in his place with rich elaborate ceremony, and turned to evil spirits for gods. It was then that they came to be known by various names and represented by various idols in the pagan world.

Tell, Muse, their names as they became known then, as they waked from their trance on the lake of fire, at the call of their great leader, came one by one, in order of precedence where Satan stood on the empty shore. The multitude of undistinguished angels stood yet aloof.

Among them the chief were those who, after having left the abyss of Hell, wandered on earth in quest of victims (among mankind), and dared to establish their centres of worship, long after their fall, in the immediate vicinity of God's temple, and claim adoration from mankind. They even confronted Jehovah whose seat was Sion. The Ark, containing the table of the law, was desecrated by heathen idols, placed within the shrine itself, and heathen rites and ceremonies replaced the worship of true God.

First there was Moloch, to whom human sacrifices including children, were made. At the worship of Moloch drums and timbrels were beaten loudly so as to drown the cries of children who were passed through fire. The Ammonites worshipped him in Rabba, and in its neighbourhood—in Argob and in Basan to the farthest limit of the river Arnon. Moloch, however, was not content with establishing his sphere of influence in the neighbourhood of Israel. He seduced even Solomon who was reputed for his wisdom, and Solomon built a temple to him on the Mount of Olives right against the temple of God and dedicated the pleasant valley of Himmon to Moloch so that later it came to be known as Tophet and

And black Gehenna called, the type of Hell.
Next Chemos the obscene *dread*[1] of Moab's sons,
From Aroer to Nebo, and the wild
Of southmost Abarim ; in Hesebon
And Horonaim, Seon's realm, beyond
The flowery dale of Sibma clad with vines,
And Eleale to *Asphaltic pool*[2] :
Peor his other name, when he enticed
Israel in Sittim, on their march from Nile,
To do him wanton rites, which cost them woe.
Yet thence his *lustful orgies*[3] he enlarged
Even to that *hill of scandal*[4], by the grove
Of Moloch homicide, lust hard by hate ;
Till good Josiah drove them thence to Hell.
With these came they who, from the bordering flood
Of old Euphrates to the *brook*[5] that parts
Egypt from Syrian ground, had general names
Of Baalim and Ashtaroth—those male.
These feminine. For spirits, when they please,
Can either sex assume, or both ; so soft
And *uncompounded*[6] is their essence pure,
Nor tied or *manacled*[7] with joint or limb,
Nor founded on the *brittle*[8] strength of bones,
Like cumbrous flesh ; but, in what shape they choose,
Dilated[9] or *condensed*[10], bright or obscure,
Can execute their aery purposes,
And works of love or enmity fulfil.
For those the race of Israel oft forsook
Their *Living Strength*[11] and *unfrequented*[12] left
His righteous altar, bowing lowly down
To bestial, gods ; for which their heads as low
Bowed down in battle, sunk before the spear
Of despicable foes. With these in troop
Came Astoreth, whom the Phoenicians called
Astarte, Queen of Heaven, with *crescent*[13] *horns*[14] ;
To whose bright image nightly by the moon
Sidonian[15] virgins paid their vows and songs ;
In Sion also not unsung, where stood
Her temple on the offensive mountain built,
By that *uxorious king*[16] whose heart, though large,
Beguiled[17] by fair idolatresses, fell
To idols foul. *Thammuz*[18] came next behind,

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1. Object of dread 2. Dead Sea 3. Immoral rites 4. Mount of Olives 5. Besor 6. Unmixed 7. Fettered 8. Frail 9. Expanded 10. Contracted. 11. Jehovah 12. Unvisited 13. Increasing 14. Extremities of the moon 15. Phoenician 16. Solomon 17. Deceived 18. Phoenician god.

Gehenna, symbolical of Hell itself. Then came Chemos. He was feared and worshipped by the Moabites in the region from Aroer to Nebo, and the wilderness of Abarim in the farthest south, in Hesebon Heronaim—the tract conquered by Sehon, beyond the vine-clad valley of Sibma and Eleale to the Dead Sea. His second name was Peor when he seduced the Israelites in Sittim, after they had left Egypt, and the Israelites worshipped him with licentious ceremonies, which brought on them the wrath of God. His licentious worship extended even to the Mount of Olives (which had already a bad name as the seat of Moloch) by the grove of Moloch, the murderer. Thus, lust (Chemos) was placed side by side with murder (Moloch). Later they were driven to Hell by Josiah. They were followed by the bad angels, known in the region from the Euphrates to the river that separates Egypt from Syria. They were called Baalim and Ashtaroth—the former male, the latter female. Spirits can assume either the male, or the female sex, or both as they please. They are not cumbered with the material body—they are made of a fine substance i.e., ether and are free to take whatever shape they please, either expanded or shortened, bright or dim, and can accomplish their purpose through the medium of air, and they can show either love or enmity in their action. For them the Israelites often abandoned their true God, and left in neglect his genuine altar, worshipping animals for Gods. For this they suffered defeat in battle at the hands of the enemies whom they could have easily despised In their company came Astoreth whom the Phoenician called Astarte, queen of heaven represented with the crescent of the moon. The Phoenician maidens paid homage to her bright image and sang praises of her at night by the moonlight. She was also worshipped in Sion : her temple stood on Mount of Olives, built by Solomon who was too enamoured of his mistresses who led him to worship heathen idols. Next came Thammuz.

Whose annual wound in Lebanon *allured*[1]
The Syrian damsels to lament his fate
In *amorous ditties*[2] all a summer's day
While smooth Adonis from his native rock
Ran purple to the Sea, supposed with blood
Of Thammuz yearly wounded : the love-tale
Infected *Sion's daughters*[3] with *like heat*[4]
Whose wanton passions in the sacred porch
Ezekiel saw, when, by the vision led,
His eye surveyed the dark idolatries
Of *alienated Judah*[5]. Next came one
Who mourned in earnest, when the captive *ark*[6]
Maimed his brute, image, head and hands lopt off
In his own temple, on the *grunsel-edge*[7],
Where he fell flat. and shamed his worshippers :
Dagon[8] his name, sea-monster, upward man
And downward fish ; yet had his temple high
Reared in Azotus, dreaded through the coast
Of Palestine, in Gath and Ascalon,
And Accaron and Gaza's frontier bounds,
Him followed *Rimmon*[9], whose delightful seat
Was fair Damascus, on the fertile banks
Of Abbana and Pharphar, *lucid*[10] streams.
He also against the House of God was bold :
A *leper*[11] once he lost and gained a *king*[12]
Ahaz, his *sottish*[13] conqueror, whom he drew
God's altar to *disparage*[14] and displace
For one of Syrian mode, whereon to burn
His odious offering, and adore the gods
Whom he had vanquished. After these appeared
A crew who, under names of old renown,
Osiris, Isis, Orus and their train,
With *monstrous*[15] shapes and sorceries *abused*[16]
Fanatic Egypt and her priests, to seek
Their wandering gods disguised in *brutish forms*[17]
Rather than human. Nor did Israel scape
The infection, when their borrowed gold composed
The calf in Oreb ; and the *rebel king*[18]
Doubled that sin in Bethel and in Dan,
Likening his Maker to the grazed ox—
Jehovah, who, in one night, when he passed
From Egypt marching, equalled with one stroke
Both her first-born and all her bleating gods.

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1. Tempted 2. Love songs 3. Israelite women 4. Similar excess of grief 5. Drawn away from Jehovah 6. Sacred chest, containing the Tables of the Law 7. Threshold 8. God of the Philistines 9. God of the Syrians 10. Bright 11. Naaman 12. Ahaz 13. Stupid 14. Dishonour 15. Hateful 16. Deceived 17. Animal shapes 18. Jeroboam.

The Syrian maidens mourned him in love-songs throughout a summer day, believing that he bled every year from the mortal wound he had received from a boar in Lebanon, while the river Adonis flowed red from its source, supposed to be stained with the blood of Thammuz every year. His cult also corrupted the women of Israel, and they too celebrated his worship with licentious rites in the sacred gateway of the Temple. Fzekiel, while a prisoner in Babylon, saw in a vision those profane rites performed by the Israelites, fallen away from their true God. Next came one who had good reason to lament his fate, when the ark being placed by his side by the Philistines, his brutish image felt down multilated, his head and hands being served, on the very threshold of his temple. Thus, his worshippers were humiliated. His name was Dagon. He was a sea-monster, half man, half fish. His temple was erected in Azotus. He was regarded with awe along the coast of Palestine, in Gath and Ascalon and Accaron on the frontiers of Gaza. He was followed by Rimmon, who was worshipped in pleasant Damascus, in the fertile region, watered by the Abbana and Pharphar, two glistening streams. He also seduced the Israelites from their God.

A leper, Naaman, once worshipped Rimmon, but being cured of his leprosy by Elisha, he embraced the Hebrew religion. But Rimmon gained a king (Ahaz) as his advocate. Ahaz conquered Rimmon's country (he rather persuaded the King of Assyria to take Damascus) and was so foolish as to set up his image in the temple, thus dishonouring God's alter, and burned hateful offerings to him and worshipped the gods whom he had conquered. After these came a crowd who were known by the names of Osiris, Isis, Orus and their attendants. They were worshipped in animal shapes and seduced the bigotted Egyptians and their priests who sought the gods, who were put to flight by the giants, in the shape of animals rather than of men. Nor did the Israelites escape the corruption for the gold which had borrowed from Egypt was moulded into a calf in Horeb, to be worshipped by them. The disloyal king, Jeroboam, repeated the crime twice — in Bethel and in Dan, setting up the image of an ox for God. Jehovah punished the Israelites for their disloyalty, when he sent a plague that killed the first born both of men and beasts in Egypt.

Belial came last, than whom a Spirit more *lewd*[1]
Fell not from Heaven, or more gross to love
Vice for itself. To him no temple stood
Or altar smoked ; yet who more oft than he
In temples and at altars, when the priest
Turns athiest, as did *Eli's sons*[2], who filled
With lust and violence the house of God ?
In courts and palaces he also reigns,
And in luxurious cities, where the noise
Of riot[3] ascends above their loftiest towers,
And injury and outrage ; and when night
Darkens the streets, then wander forth the *sons*
Of Belial[4], *flown*[5], *with insolence and wine*[6].
Witness the streets of *Sodom*[7], and that night
In *Gibeah*[8], when the hospitable door
Exposed a *matron*[9], to avoid worse rape.

These were the *prime*[10] in order and in might ;
The rest were long to tell, though far renowned,
The Ionian gods—of *Javans issue*[11] held
Gods, yet confessed later than Heaven and Earth,
Their boasted parents :—Titan, Heaven's first-born.
With his enormous brood, and birthright seized
By younger *Saturn*[12] ; he from mightier Jove,
His own and *Rhea's*[13] son, like measure found ;
So Jove usurping reigned.—These, first in Crete
And *Ida*[14] known, thence on the snowy top
Of cold *Olympus*[15] ruled the middle air,
Their highest Heaven ; or on the *Delphian cliff*[16],
Or in *Dodona*[17] and through all the bounds
Of *Doric land*[18] ; or who with Saturn old
Fled over *Adria*[19] to the *Hesperian fields*,[20]
And o'er the *Celtic*[21] roamed the utmost isles.

All these and more came flocking ; but with looks
Downcast and *damp*[22] ; yet such wherein appeared
Obscure some glimpse of joy, to have found their Chief
Not in despair, to have found themselves not lost
In loss itself ; which on his countenance cast
Like *doubtful hue*[23]. But he, his wonted pride

1. Licentious 2. Hophni and Phinehas 3. Revelry 4. Roisterers 5. Inflated 6. Druken insolence 7. City of Palestine, near the Dead Sea 8. City of the tribe of Benjamin 9. Wife of a Levite 10. First 11. Greeks. 12. The youngest of the Titans 13. Saturn's sister 14. Mountain in Crete 15. Between Macedonia and Thessaly 16. Southern slope of Parnassus 17. Epirus 18. Greece 19. Adriatic 20. Italy 21. France 22. Depressed 23. Of joy mixed with grief.

Belial came last. A spirit, more licentious or more perverse, had not fallen from Heaven, loving as he did vice for its own sake. He had no temple or altar dedicated to him. Yet none exercised a subtler in fluence intemples and at altars when the priest denied God, as Belial's sons did who desecrated the temple of God with licentious outrages.

Belial's had his stronghold in courts and palaces and in luxurious cities, where the noise of revelry, followed by violence, reached above the highest towers. At night the revellers (who are the devotees of Belial) walk the streets, and swagger in tipsy condition. The streets of Sodom and the night in Gibeah may be cited as examples ; at the latter place a married woman was surrendered by her host, to the roisterers so that a more vicious outrage might be avoided.

These were the first in order and in power. It would be long to enumerate the rest, though the Greek gods were far celebrated.

These gods were the offspring of Heaven and Earth ; yet they were worshipped by the Greeks. The Titans were the first issue of Heaven. They were a numerous race. The youngest of them, Saturn, seized the throne. His own and Rhea's son, the more powerful Jove, dispossessed him and reigned as an usurper. They were first known in Crete and Ida ; thence they fixed their abode on the snowcapped Olympus, which was much lower than Heaven itself—yet Olympus, was their highest Heaven. They had also their seats as Delphi and in Dodona, and through the length and breadth of Greece. There were also those who fled with Saturn across the Adriatic to Italy and France and the British Isles, the farthest limit of the then known world.

All these evil spirits and many more came in a multitude. But they had downcast and depressed looks ; yet there was some touch of dim joy in their looks in finding that their leader was free from despair and that they were not altogether confounded in their defeat. Their own looks reflected on Satan's countenance the dim shadow of joy, dashed with grief. But Satan soon recovering his customary pride,

Soon *recollecting*[1], with high words, that bore
Semblance[2] of worth, no substance, gently raised
Their fainting courage and dispelled their fears :
Then straight commands that, at the warlike sound
Of trumpets loud and *clarions*[3], he upreared
His mighty standard. That proud honour claimed
Azazel as his right, a Cherub tall !
Who forthwith from and glittering staff *unfurled*[4]
The imperial ensign, which, full high *advanced*[5],
Shone like a meteor streaming to the wind,
With gems and golden lustre rich *emblazed*,[6]
Seraphic arms and trophies : all the while
Sonorous metal blowing material sounds :
At which the universal host up-sent
A shout that tore Hell's *concave*[7], and beyond
Frighted the reign of Chaos and old Night.
All in a moment through the gloom were seen
Ten thousand banners rise into the air.
With *orient*[8] colours waving ; with them rose
A forest huge of spears ; and thronging *helms*[9]
Appeared, and *serried*[10] shields in thick array
Of depth immeasurable. Anon they move
In perfect *phalanx*[11] to the *Dorian mood*[12]
Of flutes and soft *recorders*[13] ; such as raised
To highth of noblest temper heroes old
Arming to battle, and instead of rage
Deliberate[14] valour *breathed*[15], firm and unmoved
With dread of death to fight or foul retreat ;
Nor wanting power to mitigate and swage,
With solemn *touches*[16], troubled thoughts, and chase
Anguish and doubt and fear and sorrow and pain
Form mortal and immortal minds. Thus they,
Breathing united force with *fixed*[17] thought,
Moved on in silence to soft pipes that charmed,
Their painful steps o'er the burnt soil. And now
Advanced in view they stand—a *horrid*[18] front
Of dreadful length and dazzling arms, in *guise*[19]
Of warriors old, with ordered spear and shield,
Awaiting what command their mighty Chief
Had to impose. He through the armed *files*[20]
Darts his experienced eye, and soon *traverse*[21]
The whole battalion views—their order due,

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1. Recovering 2. Appearance 3. Shrill trumpets used in war 4. United 5. Raised 6. Adorned with heraldic devices 7. Vault 8. Bright 9. Helmets 10. Interlocked 11. Military formation 12. Simple and solemn music 13. Small pipes 14. Well-considered 15. Inspired 16. Tunes 17. Resolute 18. Bristling 19. Manner 20. Rows 21. From side to side.

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revived their drooping courage and banished their fear with high sounding words which were an empty vaunt, though they bore the appearance of heroic courage—then he commanded his stupendous banner to be raised to the blast of trumpets. Azazel, a tall Cherub, claimed as his right, the proud privilege of uplifting his banner. At once he unrolled Satan's royal banner from the bright staff. Being fully raised it shown like a meteor blazing in the air. It was adorned with heraldic devices. All the time the trumpets blew martial notes, in response to which the angelic host raised a tremendous roar which seemed to split the vault of Hell, and startled with fright the realm of Chaos and Night on the outskirts.

All of a sudden, ten thousand banners were seen to rise into the air through the darkness, waving with gay colours. At the same time there also appeared a dense mass of spears, of crowding helmets and interlocked shields, all drawn up in close impenetrable battle array. Soon those angels moved in close battle order to the simple and solemn Dorian music, played by flutes and recorders—such music has inspired ancient heroes, going out to battle with steady, firm and unshaken courage, totally expelling the fear of death. Nor did this music want power to charm away with solemn notes, unhappy thoughts, anguish, hesitation and fear, misery and affliction both from the minds of men and gods. Thus they led by one common purpose and resolve, moved on in silence to the music of soft-toned pipes that relieved them of pain as they walked on the burning soil. Now they stand, dared to view a bristling front of unending length and glittering arms, in the manner of ancient warriors, with spear and shield held in battle order, waiting to hear what command their leader would issue. Satan scans with his searching eyes the ranks, and examines the whole army from side-to-side—he observes

Their *visages*[1] and stature as of gods ;
Their number last he sums. And now his heart
Distends[2] with pride, and hardening in his strength
Glories ; for never since created Man,
Met such *embodied*[3] force as named with these,
Could merit more than that *small infantry*[4]
Warred on by cranes ; though all the giant brood
Of Phlegra[5] with the heroic race were joined
That fought at *Thebes*[6] and *Ilium*[7], on each side
Mixed with *auxiliar*[8] gods ; and what resounds
In fable or romance of *Uther's son*[9],
Begirt with British and *Armoric*[10] knights ;
And all who since, *baptized*[11] or infidel,
Jousted[12] in Aspramont, or Montalban,
Damasco, Marocco or Trebisond ;
Or whom *Biserta*[13] sent from Afric shore
When Charlemain with all *peerage*[14] fell
By *Fontarabbia*[15]. Thus far these beyond
Compare of imortal prowess, yet observed
Their dread Commander. He above the rest
In shape and gesture proudly eminent,
Stood like a tower ; his form had yet not lost
All her original brightness, nor appeared
Less than Archangel ruined, and the excess
Of glory obscured, as when the sun new-risen
Looks through the *horizontal*[16] misty air
Shorn of his beams, or from behind the moon,
In dim eclipse, *disastrous*[17] twilight sheds
On half the nations, and with fear of change
Perplexes monarchs. Darkened so, yet shone
Above them all the Archangel ; but his face
Deep scars of thunder had *intrenched*[18] and care
Sat on his faded cheek, but under brows
Of dauntless courage, and considerate pride
Waiting revenge. Cruel his eye, but cast
Sings of *remorse*[19] and passion, to behold
The *fellows*[20] of his crime, the followers rather
(Far other once beheld in bliss), condemned
For ever now to have their lost in pain ;
Millions of Spirits for his fault *amerced*[21]
Of Heaven, and from eternal splendours flung
For his revolt : yet faithful how they stood,

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1. Faces 2. Swells 3 Organised 4. Pygmies 5. Scene, battle between gods giants 6. City of Greece 7. Troy 8. Assisting 9. King Arthur 10. Of Brittany 11. Christian 12. Fought in tournaments 13. In Africa 14. Knights 15. In Spain 16. Hanging on the horizon 17. Inauspicious 18. Furrowed 19. Pity 20. Partners 21. Deprived.

the military array, their faces and stature as those of gods.

At last he counts their number. Now his heart swells with pride, and exults, more getting obdurate in its strength, for never, since the creation of man, assembled such an organised force as matched with the force of these fallen angels, can be reckoned any the better than the handful of pygmies whom the cranes fought—though all the generation of giants who fought the gods in Phlegra were combined with the innumerable heroes who fought at Thebes, and Troy, reinforced by gods on either side. Nor can there be the least comparison with anything that is told in story or romance of Arthur, and his British and Armoric knights ; or of those Christians or Saracens, who later fought tournaments in Aspramont, or Montalban or Damascus, or Marocco, or Trebisond ; or of the Saracens who crossed from Africa and cut off Charlemagne, and his knights at Fontarabbia they were not to be matched by any human forces, ever assembled. Yet they watched and obeyed their grim leader.

He stood like a tower, distinguished above the rest by his shape and bearing. He had not yet totally lost his original lustre. Nor did he appear worse than a sinblasted Archangel, with his splendour faded ; as when the sun, newly risen obscured by the mist that hangs on the horizon or in an eclipse, sheds from behind the moon a dismal, shadowy light, foreboding disaster to mankind, and troubles the minds of kings with the fear of revolution. Satan was dimmed like the sun peering through the mist or in an eclipse ; yet he outshone all the rest. Thunder had furrowed his face, and there were lines of care on his pale cheek, but his brows bespoke unfailing courage and thoughtful pride, bent on revenge. Cruelty appeared in his eyes, but they also cast looks of pity and grief when he saw the partners of his crime, or rather his followers. Once he had seen them enjoying the happiness of Heaven. Now they were condemned to drag out their existence in pain and torment—millions of spirits who had been robbed of Heaven for his fault—flung out from the resplendent region for his act of rebellion ; yet they stood faithful, though they

Their glory withered—as, when *Heaven's fire*[1]
Hath *scathed*[2] the forest oaks or mountain pines,
With *singed*[3] top their stately growth, though bare,
Stands on the *blasted*[4] heath. He now prepared
To speak : whereat their doubled ranks they bend
From wing to wing, and half enclose him round
With all his peers : attention held them *mute*[5]
Thrice he *assayed*[6] and thrice, in spite of scorn,
Tears such as angels weep, burst forth : at last
Words *interwove*[7] with sighs found out their way :
        "O myriads of immortal Spirits ! O Powers
Matchless, but with the Almighty !—and that strife,
Was not inglorious, though the *event*[8] was dire,
As this place testifies, and this dire change,
Hateful to utter. But what power of mind,
Foreseeing or *presaging*,[9] from the depth
Of knowledge past or present, could have feared
How such united force of gods, how such
As stood like these, could ever know repulse ?
For who can yet believe, though after loss,
That all these *puissant*[10] legions, whose exile
Hath emptied Heaven, shall fail to re-ascend,
Self-raised, and re-possess their *native seat*[11] ?
For me, be witness all the host of Heaven,
If *counsels different*[12], or danger shunned
By me, have lost our hopes. But he who reigns
Monarch in Heaven, till then as one secure
Sat on his throne, upheld by old repute,
Consent or custom, and his regal state
Put forth at full, but still his strength concealed,
Which tempted our attempt, and wrought our fall.
Henceforth his might we know, and know our own,
So as not either to provoke, or dread
New war, provoked ; our *better part*[13] remains
To work in *close*[14] design, by fraud or guile,
What force effected not ; that he no less
At length from us may find, who overcomes
By force hath overcome but half his foe.
Space may produce new worlds : whereof so *rife*[15]
There went a *fame*[16], in Heaven that he ere long
Intended to create, and therein plant
A *generation*[17] whom his choice regard
Should favour equal to the sons of Heaven.
Thither, if but to *pry*[18], shall be perhaps

1. Lightning 2. Injured 3. Buts 4. Withered 5. Silent 6. Tired 7. Interwoven 8. Real 9. Anticipating 10. Powerful 11. Heaven 12. Difference of opinion 13. Discretion 14. Secret 15. Current 16. Rumour 17. Race 18. Look closely.

had partly lost their splendour : as when lightning has injured the forest oaks or mountain pines—and they stand on the withered heath, with their tops burnt away. Satan now prepared to speak. They formed a semi-circle round him. They were hushed in silence in order to listen to him. Thrice he attempted, and thrice, in spite of scorn for his weakness, tears, angelic tears so different from human tears, burst from his eyes. At last words, interwoven with sighs, issued thus :

"O multitude of angelic beings O ! powers unrivalled except with the Almighty ! that contest with the lord of Heaven reflected no discredit on us, though the result was lamentable, as this place proves us well as this our change which I hate to reflect on. Whatever knowledge of past or present we possessed, none of us could foresee or anticipate that such a gathering of gods, as now stand before me, could ever have sustained defeat ? Who can yet believe that even after our defeat such a considerable body of angels, whose expulsion has left Heaven empty, shall call to raise again to Heaven by their own efforts and repossess it as their natural inheritance ? As for me, I call the angels to witness ; whether difference of opinion or dangers avoided by me, have anything to do with our defeat. But he who reigns as the lord of Heaven, until we challenge his power, seemed to hold his sovereignty secure either by reason of long standing reputation, or agreement, or tradition and though he displayed all his royal dignity, he still concealed his strength and that was why we challenged his power with the result that we were defeated. Now we have an adequate idea of his strength and of our strength too so that in future we are not going to wage any war or dread any war thrust upon us by Him. We have grown wiser now to work in secrecy; so by that deception or treachery we may achieve what we could not achieve by force. He will, no doubt, find that he who overcomes by force, has but half beaten his enemy.

New worlds are going to be created out of space. In Heaven a rumour went that God intended to create a new world and put in it a race to whom he would show the same favour as to the angels. Our first task will be to peep into that world and explore the state of things there.

Our first *eruption*[1], thither or elsewhere;
For this infernal pit shall never hold
Celestial Spirits in bondage, nor the Abyss
Long under darkness cover. But these thoughts
Full counsel must *mature*[2]. Peace is *despaired*[3],
For who can think submission? War, then, war
Open or understood, must be resolved."

He spake; and, to *confirm*[4] his words, out-flew
Millions of flaming swords, drawn from the thighs
Of mighty Cherubim; the sudden blaze
Far round illumined Hell. Highly they *raged*[5]
Against the Highest, and fierce with grasped arms
Clashed on their sounding shields the din of war,
Hurling defiance toward the vault of Heaven.

There stood a hill not far, whose *grisly*[6] top
Belched[7] fire and rolling smoke; the rest entire
Shone with a glossy *scurf*[8], undoubted sign
That in his womb was hid metallic ore,
The work of sulphur. Thither, winged with speed,
A numerous *brigad*[9] hastened: as when bands
Of *Pioneers*[10], with spade and pickaxe armed,
Forerun the *royal camp*[11], to *trench*[12] a field.
Or cast a *rampart*[13]. *Mammon*[14] led them on,
Mammon, the least erected Spirit that fell
From Heaven, for even in Heaven his looks and thoughts
Were always downward bent, admiring more
The riches of Heaven's pavement, trodden gold,
Than aught divine or holy else enjoyed
In *vision beatific*[15]. By him first
Men also, and by his *suggestion*[16] taught,
Ransacked the *centre*[17], and with impious hands
Rifled[18] the bowels of their mother Earth
For treasures better hid. Soon had his crew
Opened into the hill a spacious wound,
And digged out ribs of gold. Let none *admire*[19]
That riches grow in Hell: that soil may best
Deserve the *precious bane*[20]. And here let those
Who boast in mortal things, and wondering tell
Of Babel[21], and the works of *Memphian*[22] kings.

1. Incursion 2. Develop 3. Despaired of 4. Approve 5. Stormed 6. Gruesome 7, Threw up 8. Incrustation 9. Brigade 10. Foot-soldiers who dig trenches etc. 11. An army on campaign 12. Dig trenches in 13. Defensive work 14. God of wealth 15. Revelation that makes one blessed 16. Temptation 17. Earth 18. Plundered 19. Wonder 20. Curse of mankind 21. Babylon 22. Egyptian.

There or elsewhere must we brake ourselves, for this Hell shall never contain angels in chains nor Chaos shall long shroud them in darkness. But the plan must be developed by deliberation. There can be no question of peace, for who can think of submission ? No alternative but, war, open or secret, must be resolved upon.

Satan finished his speech. And as a sign of approval, millions of flashing swords, drawn from the things of great angels, sprang into the air. The sudden brilliance illumined Hell far and near. They stormed loudly against the Almighty, and holding their swords they beat upon the resounding shields, throwing challenge towards the vaulted Heaven.

There stood a hill not far off, whose gruesome summit threw up fire and tumbling smoke ; the rest of the body of the hill glistened. It was a sure sign that it contained metallic ore, which must have been due to the presence of sulphur. There, a considerable body of angels restored : as when a division of advance corps precedes the main army, provided with spades and pickaxes, to dig trenches in the fields or throw up defensive works. Mammon directed their operations. Mammon was a stooping spirit among those who fell from Heaven, for even in Heaven he studied with downward bent eyes, the golden pavement. He was not concerned with anything divine or the exalted vision that was a delight to other angels. Taught and prompted by him men searched the Earth for riches and robbed their mother Earth of treasures that should better lie hidden in the interior. Soon the body of angels, working under Mammon, dug a hollow in the hill, and extracted gold from it ; the soil of Hell but deserves to possess gold, the curse of mankind. Let those who boast of human achievements (in architecture and material pomp and splendour), and relate the marvels of Babylon and Egyptian pyramids,

Learn how their greatest monuments of fame,
And strength, and art, easily *outdone*[1]
By Spirits *reprobate*[2], and in an hour
What in an age they, with incessant toil
And hands innumerable, scarce perform.
Nigh on the plain, in many cells prepared,
That underneath had veins of liquid fire
Sluiced[3] from the lake, a second multitude
With wondrous art *founded*[4] the massy ore,
Severing each kind, and *scummed*[5] the bullion-dross.
A third as soon, had formed within the ground
A various mould, and from the boiling cells
By strange conveyance filled each hollow nook :
As in an organ, from one blast of wind,
To many a row of pipes the sound board breathes.
Anon out of the earth a *fabric*[6] huge
Rose like an *exhalation*[7] with the sound
Of *dulcet*[8] *symphonies*[9] and voices sweet,
Built like a temple, where *pilasters*[10] round
Were set, and Doric pillars *overlaid*[11]
With golden *architrave*[12] ; nor did there want
Cornice[13] *or frieze*[14] with bossy sculptures graven ;
The roof was *fretted*[15] gold. Not Babylon,
Nor great *Alcairo*[16] such magnificence
Equalled in all their glories, to enshrine
Belus[17] or *Serapis*[18] their gods, or seat
There kings, when Egypt with Assyria strove
In wealth and luxury. The ascending *pile*[19]
Stood fixed her stately highth, and straight the doors,
Opening their brazen folds, *discover*[20], wide
Within, her amble spaces o'er the smooth
And level pavement ! from the arched roof,
Pendent[21] by subtle magic, many a row
Of starry lamps and blazing *cressets*,[22] fed
With naphtha and asphaltus, yielded light
As from a sky. The hasty multitude
Admiring, entered, and the work some praise,
And some the architect : his hand was known
In Heaven by many a towered structure high,
Where *sceptred*[23] Angels held their residence,

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1. Excelled 2. Fallen 3. Conducted 4. Smelted 5. Drew off the scum 6. Structure 7. Vapour 8. Sweet 9. Harmonies 10. Pillars 11. Surmounted 12. Chief beam 13. Highest projection 14. Part between architrave and cornice 15. Ornamented with fret-work 16. Cairo 17. Tutelary God of Babylon 18. A hybrid God 19. Structure 20. Disclose 21. Hanging 22. Basket-like-lamps 23. Exercising power and authority.

know that these durable and skilled specimens of human art and workmanship are easily excelled by fallen angels, and that in an hour they can easily surpass what men employing innumerable hands with unceasing labour, can scarcely, perform in an age. Near on the plain another body of angels prepared many cells which had, flowing beneath them, channels of liquid fire, drawn from the lake, and with extraordinary skill smelted the ore separating each kind of metal, are removed the impurities that rose to the surface of ore that was melted. A third multitude of angels had as quickly made moulds of varied shapes and designs and from the boiling cell drew off the molten metal by strange means of transport into each hollow recess as in an organ from an air-current set up, the sound board diffuses it through all the pipes. At once a stupendous structure leapt up from the earth like a vapour to sweet and harmonious notes. It took the shape of a temple, with round and graceful pillars built in the wall and supported by Doric pillars surmounted by the architect with frieze and cornice thrown in, and the frieze carved with figures in relief ; the roof was made of gold, rich with decoration. Neither Babylon nor celebrated Cairo in all its glories could match such magnificence, when they built temples for their gods, Belus and Serapis, and places for their kings, and that at a time when Egypt and Assyria vied in wealth and luxury. The structure that rose high into the air stood immovable and towering in its height. Straightway the doors opening wide revealed within a large area over the smooth and plain floor. From the arched roof hung by wonderful magic many rows of lamps, gleaming like stars and flaming basket-shaped lamps burning naphtha and asphaltus. The multitude of angles entered in haste, and stood admiring ; some admired the work, some the architect. He was known in heaven for his workmanship, for he had built many palaces where angels, exercising sovereign power, dwelt,

And sat as princes, whom the supreme King
Exalted to such power, and gave to rule,
Each in his *Hierarchy*[1], the *Orders*[2] bright.
Nor was his name unheard or unadored
In ancient Greece ; and in *Ausonian land*[3]
Men called him *Mulciber*[4] ; and how he fell
From Heaven they fabled, thrown by angry Jove
Sheer o'er the crystal battlements ; from morn
To noon he fell ; from noon to dewy eve,
A summer's day, and with the setting sun
Dropt from the zenith, like a *falling star*[5],
On Lemnos, the Aegaean isle. Thus they relate,
Erring[6] ; for he with this *rebellious rout*[7]
Fell long before ; nor aught availed him now
To have built in Heaven high towers, nor did he scape
By all his *engines*[8], but was headlong sent
With his industrious crew, to build in Hell.
    Meanwhile the winged heralds, by command
Of sovran power, with awful *ceremony*[9]
And trumpet's sound, throughout the host proclaim
A solemn council forthwith to be held
At *Pandemonium*[10], the high capital
Of Satan and his peers. Their summons called
From every band and squared regiment
By place or choice the worthiest ; they anon
With hundreds and with thousands trooping came
Attended. All *access*[11] was *thronged*[12] ; the gates
And porches wide, but chief the spacious hall
(Though like a *covered field*[13], where champions bold
Wont ride in armed, and at the *Soldan's*[14] chair
Defied the best of *Panim*[15] *chivalry*[16]
To mortal compat, or *career with lance*[17]
Thick *swarmed*[18], both on the ground and in the air,
Brushed with the hiss of rustling wings. As bees
In spring-time, when the sun with *Taurus*[19] rides,
Pour forth their populous youth about the hive
In clusters ; they among fresh dews and flowers
Fly to and fro, or on the *smoothed plank*[20],
The suburb of their *straw-built citadel*[21]
New rubbed with balm, *expatiate*[22] and confer
Their state-affairs. So thick the aery crowd

1. Grade of angels 2. Angelic orders 3. Italy 4. Vulcan, the Roman God of Fire 5. Meteor. 6. Deviating from truth 7. Crowd of rebel angels 8. Contrivance 9. Stately rite 10. Abode of demons 11. Approach 12. Crowded 13. Lists 14. Sultan's 15. Pagan 16. Knights 17. Bloodless passage of arms 18. Crowded 19. Bull, a sign of the Zodiac 20. Projecting platform 21. Beehive, made of straw 22. Walk about.

whom God, the supreme king invested with rule and authority, each according to the grade and order of angels. He was also known and worshipped in Greece. He was called Mulciber in Italy. It is narrated in mythology how he fell from heaven, cast out by angry Jove right down from the lowered walls, built of crystal. He fell from morning to noon, from noon to evening—all a summer day, and at sunset dropped from the height of heaven, like a meteor on Lemnos, the Aegaean Isle. Thus, the story goes, but it is anything but true. He fell long ago with the multitude of rebel angels. That he had built lofty towers in heaven was no extenuation of his crime. Nor did he escape by all his devices. He was thrown down precipitously from heaven, with his labours, that he might build in hell.

In the meantime, the herald angels, by the command of Satan, blew the trumpets and solemnly proclaimed that a council would be held at once in Pandemonium—the council-chamber of Satan and his companions. He summoned from every company and squadron the worthiest of the spirits who stood high in rank or by election. They came, followed by hundreds and thousands. All lines of approach, the gates and covered passages, and chiefly the vast hall were crowded. The hall resembled the enclosed lists where knights rode armed and by the Sultan's throne, challenged the best of the pagan champion either to bloody combat or to a harmless passage of arms. The spirits crowded in a dense mass either the ground or the air, which hissed with their rustling wings. As bees in spring time, when the sun enters Taurus, swarm thick about the hive and some gather honey from the dewy flowers, and others walk about on the projecting platform, which serves as a suburb to the strawbuilt hive, glued with wax and as they walk about, they discuss their public affairs ; so the innumerable angels

Swarmed and were *straitened*[1] ; till, the signal given,
Behold a wonder ! they but now who seemed
In bigness to surpass Earth's giant sons,
No less than smallest dwarfs, in narrow room
Throng numberless, like that pygmean race
Beyond the Indian mount ; or faery elves,
Whose midnight rebels, by a forest-side
Or fountain, some *belated*[2] peasant sees
Or dreams he sees, while overhead The moon
Sits *arbitress*[3] and nearer to the Earth
Wheels her pale course ; they, on their mirth and dance
Intent,[4] with *jocund*[5] music charms his ear ;
At once with joy and fear his heart *rebounds*[6],
Thus *incorporeal*[7] Spirits to smallest forms
Reduced their shapes immense, and *were at large*[8],
Though without number still, amidst the hall
Of that infernal court. But far within,
And in their own dimensions like themselves,
The great Seraphic Lords and Cherubim
In *close recess*[9] and secret *conclave*[10] sat,
A thousand demi-gods and golden seats,
Frequent[11] and full. After short silence then,
And summons read, the great *consult*[12] began.

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1. Cramped for space. 2. Benighted 3 Spectator 4. Bent 5. Merry 6. Leaps 7. Bodiless 8. Had plenty of room 9. Secretary 10. Secret meeting 11. Crowded 12. Meeting for consultation.

swarmed thick and were cramped for space. Then as the signal was given, a miracle happened. The angels who seemed to surpass the giants in stature, now assumed the shapes of the smallest dwarfs and crowded the narrow space—like the pygmies that crowded the Indian mount ; or like fairies and tiny spirits whose dance and festival may be discovered by a forest-side or fountain by a benighted peasant—or it may be that he imagines he sees them—while the moon overhead, the sole spectator, draws nearer to the Earth. The fairies and spirits, pursuing their midnight revels, entertain him with merry music. His heart is at once filled with joy and fear. Thus, aerial spirits shrank into the smallest shapes, and had plenty of room though innumerable, in the half of Pandemonium. But the higher angels sat far within and kept their normal bulk and stature. They held a secret meeting. There were a thousand semi-gods who sat on golden thrones, crowded and full. After an interval of silence, the summon was read and the meeting began.

NOTES AND EXPLANATIONS

Lines 1-26. Milton states the scope and purpose of the poem 'Man's First Disobedience' which brings sin and death into the world, reacting upon the whole human race, until redeemed by Christ. Milton's aim is, therefore, to 'justify the ways of God to men.'

Milton's invocation first to the Heavenly Muse (to satisfy the epic convention), and then to the Spirit of God (to satisfy his scruple in writing a Christian epic) is noteworthy.

1. **Man's first disobedience**—not simply man as an individual but the whole human race (that is yet to be sinned with Adam, the progenitor of mankind.) The taint of sin broadens down from Adam to his children and succeeding generations and so on. Adam (and also Eve) disobeyed God by tasting the forbidden fruit of the tree of knowledge, and fell from the state of innocence and bliss.

2. **Moral taste**—taste producing death.

3. **Brought..... world**—Death is the result of sin (Adam tasting the fruit of the tree of knowledge). **All our woe**—note the emphasis in 'our'. Adam's sin involved the whole human race in its consequences.

4. **Loss of Eden**—Eden typifies the state of innocence and sinlessness. After Adam and Eve had sinned, they were expelled from Eden.

N. B. "It is plain, from several passages in the poem, that Eden which means "blessed seat" was the general district allotted to Adam in his state of innocence though Paradise which was planted in the east of it (IV. 308) was his immediate residence, and that it was distinguished from the rest of the earth, or the outer world ; and it is also plain, from the close of the poem, that he was expelled from it, as well as from Paradise :

> They, looking back, all the eastern side beheld
> Of paradise ....
> Then hand in hand, with wandering steps and slow
> Through Eden took their solitary way.

Their solitary way, to what place ? The poet plainly, shows it was to the outer world, or part of the earth out-side Eden, to which they were proceeding by the shortest route as Paradise was in the eastern part of Eden, and they proceeded eastward :

> **The world was all before them where to choose**
> **Their place of rest, and Providence their guide.**

4-5. **Till one......restore us**—The restoration of mankind to paradise will materialize on the last judgment-day when the present world will end and a new haven and earth will arise, wherein man shall dwell in bliss with God.

In the last book of 'Paradise Lost', Milton pictures the judgment-day which establishes a new heaven and earth

for then the earth
Shall be Paradise, for happier place
Than this of Eden, and far happier days !

5. **Blissful saet**—"The blissful seat" can only mean Eden. It is used here in a figurative sense. It is not the identical Eden to which men will be restored. **Restore......seat**—The figurative sense ; till Christ restores man to life eternal which he lost by sin, and back for him eternal happiness typified in Eden.

6. **Heavenly Muse**—Milton identifies her with Urania in Book VII, but repudiates any connection between Urania and the Muse of Greek poetry. 'Heavenly Muse' is but a half-way house compromise between Greek mythology and Christian theology. **Secret**—The world has a threefold significance ; (1) *Horeb* and *Sinai* are two summits of one mountain, *Sinai* being the highest which says Josephus, in his *Jewish Antiquities*, II, iii. 5, 'cannot be seen without straining the eyes ; hence it may be called *secret*. (2) It is said in *Exodus*, xix, and elsewhere that when God gave the Laws to Moses on the top of Sinai, it was covered with dark clouds and thick smoke, and people were only to come near it till after a given signal, and even then they were only to come to a certain boundary and not to ascend it on plain of death ; hence *secret*. (3) *Secret* is used in the classical sense *secretus*, *set apart* or *separate*.

7. **Didst inspire**—Moses is suposed to be the author of the first five books of the Old Testament—*Genesis*, *Exodus*, *Leviticus*, *Numbers*, *Deuteronomy*. By Moses received the Laws from God on Sinai.

8. **That shepered**—*i. e.*, Mosses who, after his flight from Egypt, married the daughter of Jethro, a Prince of Arabia, and tended his flocks before he led the Jews from Egypt, wrote *Genesis*. **Taught**—taught in *Genesis*, the first book of the Old Testament. **Choosen seed**—the Israelites who were the chosen people of God.

10. **Chaos**—void or primordial matter out of which the world was fashioned. **Rose . ...Chaos**—Milton does not hold the doctrine of creation out of nothing. The world is created out of a previously existing substance. **Sion hill**—Sion (or Zion) and Mariah are the two hills on which Jerusalem was built. On Mariah stood the temple.

11. **Delight thee more**—Milton imagines that the Heavenly Muse may favour Sion more than Horeb or Sinai. **Siloa's brook**—Siloa was a rivulet that flowed near the temple (*Isaiah*, viii, 6, Milton evidently, invokes the Muse that inspired David and the prophets on which stood the royal palace and ark), and at Jerusalem, as well as

Moses. It should be noted that Sinai was associated with the inspiration of Moses, and Sion, with the inspiration of David and Isaiah.

12. **Oracle of God**--Solomon's temple at Jerusalem 'Oracle' refers to the 'Holy of Holles' (*Kings*, vi. 5), innermost part of the temple.

13. **Invoke the aid**—supplicate your assistance. **Adventurous**—venturesome, attempting to deal with mysteries of heaven and earth.

14. **Middle**—middling ; mediocre. "It has also an implicit reference to the "middle air," the "highest heaven" of the Olympians.

15. **Aonian Mount**—Aonia, the ancient name of Boeotia, contained Parnassus. Helicon and other places, supposed to be the haunt of the Muses. 'Aonian Mount' stands for the productions of Greek poets, which Milton wants to surpass in boldness of conception. **Pursues**—like the Latin ***prosequor***, to proceed with a subject.

16. **Things unattempted .....rhyme**—*N. B.* This line has been construed by some commentators as Milton's claim to absolute originality. The scene of the line should not be pressed too closely. All that Milton means is that he attempts a new kind of epic—an epic dealing with infinite space and time. With the creation of world and man, with the origin of sin, *Paradise Lost* is in a sense unique. Milton's ambition is also to surpass the ancient poets. **Rhyme**—used for poetry.

18. **Upright .....pure**—Note the practice of Milton to place a substantive between two adjectives.

17-18. **Prefer......pure**—the idea is that the human heart is the true temple of God.

21. **Dove-like sat'st brooding**—In *Genesis*, i. 2, we read : "And the spirit of God moved on the surface of the water." The original Hebrew word indicated 'brood'. Milton, therefore correctly renders the idea. **Dove-like**—suggested by *Luke* : iii. 22. "And the Holy Ghost descended in a bodily shape like a dove upon him."

22. **Mad'st it pregnant**—quickened it with life. **What ... dark**—there may be a reference to his blindness.

23. **Illumine**—Milton seeks spiritual enlightenment. **What... ...support**—*N. B.* Conscious as Milton is of the importance of his theme and of corresponding dignity of style, he strikes here the note of high seriousness which is ever to distinguish his epic style.

25. **Eternal Providence**—"Providence means the loving care and foresight of God : it is also used for God.

Lines 27-49. The starting-point of the poem is the revolt of Satan, who after his expulsion from heaven, plans the fall of Adam. A brief summary of these events is given here to enable the reader to follow the story.

29. **In ....State**—*i. e*—when they were living in Eden in a state of innocence and happiness.

30. **Favoured of Heaven**—favoured by God in the sense that man was first endowed with happiness and immortality.

32. **For one restraint**—On account of one restriction (that they were not to eat the fruit of the tree of knowledge).

35. **Stirred ....revenge**—stimulated by jealousy and the desire of revenge.

36. **His pride**—his pride is responsible for his fall.

38. **Rebel angels**—Angels who followed Satan as their leader, refusing to acknowledge the Son of God as their overlord.

39. **Set......glory**—'Glory' may refer to the seat of the Almighty. It should be noted that Satan before his revolt was in place high above his peers (as Abdiel says in v. 812). Evidently Satan aimed at divine glory and royal power such as God and His Son enjoyed.

41. **If he opposed**—If Satan challenged sovereignty of God.

42. **The throne and monarchy of God**—Note that God is received as a sovereign, the angels being his vassals (as in the world of chivalry). This, as Bagehot points out, jars on the religious sense of the Christians.

45. **Flaming**—Satan was pursued by the thunder of God. **Ethereal sky**—*N. B.* Ancient Greek philosophers added a fifth elements *aether*, to the four, earth, air, fire and water. Ether was the substance out of which heaven and the angels of heaven were created. The phrase means the region, occupied by God and His angels.

46. **Ruin**—in the Latin sense, a fall with violence and precipitation. **Combustion**—refers to the flaming track of Satan's descent.

47. **Bottomless perdition**—*i.e.*, eternal misery in the bottomless pit of Hell.

48. **Adamantine**—"Adamant" is strictly *the unconquerable*, usually applied to the hardest metal ; adamantine means here not to be broken. "**Penal fire**—fire of hell, ever consuming him as punishment (for his revolt).

Lines 50-83. In these lines, hell is described. The poem opens with the action of Satan and his angels in hell. So Milton, following the epic tradition, begins in the middle of things. Satan is portrayed as a heroic figure in this books. He is the first to recover from stupor, as he lies on the fiery lake in hell. He rallies again the fallen angels for further attempts against God. He yet retains his intellectual supremacy among them, and schemes the fall of man to spite God.

50. **Nine times .....night**—Milton uses a periphrasis for the duration of nine days and nights for there was no sun as yet to mark the division of hours into day and night.

51. **Horrid**—a proleptic use *i.e.*, used in anticipation of the horrible transformation of the fallen angels that takes place later.

53. **Though immortal**—the fact of their immortality makes their misery eternal. It means that they cannot ever get away from god's wrath.

54. **Reserved .....wrath**—God has not yet done with his punishment : further punishment awaits him.

57. **Affliction and dismay**—*N.B.* On this, Raleigh remarks "And when Satan's eyes are called "baleful" the word besides indicating the "huge application and dismay" that he feels, gives a hint of the woes that are in store for the victims on whom those eyes have not yet lit.

61. **Dungeon**—usually an underground prison. Appropriately applied to hell, since it resembles an underground vault and since it is to serve as prison for Satan and his angels.

63. **Darkness visible**—not absolute darkness which is invisible, but gloom only when there is barely light sufficient to show that there are objects. It is darkness shot through by a dim and dismal ray of light. 'Visible' is a transferred epithet, and really applies to objects which are visible in the darkness.

66. **Hope never comes**—Milton had in mind the inscription on the gate of Dantes *Inferno* : "All hope abandon ye, who enter here."

68. **Urges**—drives, Latin sense. **Fiery deluge**—a stream of liquid fire running impetuously on.

73. **Rebellious**—*i. e.*, rebel angels. Adjectives used for a noun.

74. **From the centre... ...utmost**—The 'centre' is the earth, the supposed centre of the universe (according to the Ptolemaic theory the utmost pole is the universe of the fixed point upon the utmost sphere the *primum mobile*) on which the universe revolved. Milton means that the distance between heaven and hell is thrice as great as the distance between earth and the topmost point of the universe.

77. **Whirlwinds of tempestuous fire**—a tempest of fire raged in the hell like whirlwinds. Such a tempest caused by the confusion of the rebel angels.

80. **Palestine**—Name give in early times to a part of the Syrian seaboard only, but applied during the dawn of Christian era to the whole country of the Jews.

81. **Beelzebub**—literally, the god of flies. He was worshipped at Ekron, a city of the Philistines and was believed to protect the people from the flies in that hot district. Beelzebub is called "the princes of devils" in *Matthew*, xii. 24.

Lines. 84-124. Satan's speech to Beelzebub. Satan is portrayed as still unconquered, breathing courage and resolution and defying the worst penalty that God could inflict upon him. He hopes to renew the contest with God in the future.

84. **How changed**—on account of their rebellion these angels have already lost of their angelic radiance.

88. **United thought and counsels**—perfect agreement of thought and policy between Satan and Beelzebub.

89. **Glorious enterprise**—battle against the autocracy of God.

90-91. **Now misery......ruin**—Satan pays a tribute to Beelzebub's fidelity. His speech is marked both by pathos and dignity. The 'contrast between his former state and present misery no doubt, saddens his spirit ; but his resolve not to submit to God elicits our admiration.

93. **He......thunder**—Satan avoids mentioning God. *N. E.* "The commentators think that Satan here exhibits his hatred and scorn, by disdaining to use the name of the Almighty, though he must acknowledge his superiority. I rather think—the point of the line consists, not in omitting the name of God, but to pointing out cause of his accidental superiority, his *thunder* so 258.

"Whom thunder hath made greater"—*Prendiville.*

97. **Though..... lustre**—Satan sees that Bleezebub has lost part of his angelic brightness. He is aware that similar change has taken place in him. He means that he may have changed physically for the worse, but his intellect remain as alert and vigorous as before.

98. **High disdain**—lofty scorn. **Injured merit**—offended dignity. **Sense of injured merit**—Satan had genuine grievance against God. The Son of God was created later ; yet he was promoted over Satan's head. It is on this issue that he raised the rebellion.

99. **Mightiest**—Note that Satan pays indirect tribute of the power of God.

102. **That......reign**—*N. B.* In Satan's speeches, God is pictured as an absolute and arbitrary sovereign.. Milton can hardly redeem this impression of God. The point is that Milton's sympathies seem to be divided between God and Satan in the first two books. The speeches he puts in the mouth of Satan, are the speeches of one, groaning under tyranny, and at last rising to break and chains. **Me preferring**—choosing me before God. It implies that these angel discarded their allegiance to God and chose Satan as their leader.

104. **Dubious battle**—(1) Battle of which the issue is uncertain ; (2) battle which still remains to be decided by further contest in the future. In this speech, Satan proposes to carry on his hostilities with God, not in open war, but by craft and fraud.

94-105. *Exp.* **Yet not for those......throne**—in his speech, Satan declares that he is not going to give up his contest with God. He and his angels have been flung down from heaven into hell, where they are to dwell in eternal torment and misery. It is no light punishment that they are suffering. Satan is aware that still worse punishment may be inflicted on them. Yet he does not regret his revolt. And though he has lost part of his angelic brightness, his mind remains unchanged. He still defies the autocracy of God. In this contest, a great part of angels joined him ; certainly they were glad to be done with the tyranny of God, and chose him as their leader. They opposed their power to God's, and in the battle that followed, they were able to shake the foundation of His throne. The result of the battle is still inconclusive. He intends to renew the contest soon.

106. **The unconquerable will**—since his will remains unconquered, Satan questions whether the battle has been conclusive at all.

107. **Study of revenge**—study (*Latin*, *studium*)—is endeavour

109. **What is else......overcome**—*N.B.* In the first edition, there was a question mark after this line. If we interpret the line with the question mark, the meaning will be : "When we have such spirit of revenge, such undying hate, such indomitable courage, it can it be said that we have been overcome ?" It will be a piece of rhetorical sophistry

Newton removed the question mark, and he has been followed by Todd and Knightley. The meaning then is : "Whatever else these is, besides steadfast hate, unyielding and unconquerable will, which cannot be overcome. These are his glory, and that glory cannot be extorted from him."

"What is else not to be overcome' may also refer to "empyreal substance" in line 117.

110-11. **That glory......from me**—my mind remains my own. God cannot conquer my mind. So long as I am what I am, so long as my identity remains unchanged, I will carry on an endless contest with God, whatever His power and howsoever great His wrath, cannot certainly rob me of this glory.

N. B. Milton was well-read in the philosophy of the schoolmen. He makes Satan a subtle dialectician ; and he makes God, in his later books, argue, as Pope says, like a school divine.

114. **Doubted his empire**—feared to lose his supreme authority.

116. **Fate**—Lietrally, 'that which has been spoken' (*Latin*, *fatum*, past participle of *fari*, to speak) ; the inevitable (Destiny). The gods of classical mythology were subject to destiny. Satan believes that there is a power (Destiny) to which even God is subject. *N. B.* Milton introduces a classical conception which is inconsistent with Christian theology.

117. **This empyreal substance**—The angels are made of ether. It may be paraphrased by *fiery essence*. *Empyreum* is the seat of pure fire ; compare : "He maketh his angels, spirits, and his ministers a *flame of fire*"—*Psalm*, civ 4. **Fail**—perish.

116-17. **Since.....fail**—Satan mean means that the angels, though fallen, will still possess the strength of gods and the qualities of invulnerability and imperishability.

118. **This great event**—the late battle.

119. **In arms not worse**—we are not inferior to God in strength. **In foresight much advanced**—superior to God in wisdom and intelligence.

122. **Irreconcilable...... Foe**—never making up our peace with our formidable enemy, God.

124. **Sole reigning**--ruling all by himself. **Tyranny**—absolute power. In the classical sense *tyranny* means usurpation of supreme power, though it may be beneficially or arbitrarily used Satan probably uses the word in its modern sense.

Lines 125-55. Beelzebub seems to be more alive to the realities of the situation. In his reply, he points out that their imperishability might prove a curse to them, for the punishment that God inflicts on them might be eternal.

126. **Racked ...despair**—the defeat and expulsion (which Satan did not bargain for) filled his heart with despair, but he concealed his despair in boastful words.

128. **Throned Powers**—"Powers that erst in Heaven sat on thrones" (line 360). There may be a reference to the orders of angels—Thrones, Powers. Millton is not careful of the distinction between the different orders of angels.

129. **Seraphim**—an order of angels. Literally, "the burning ones." *Serophim* is the Hebrew plural of *seraph.*

130. **Under thy condnct**—under your leadership.

131. **Perpetual King**—Beelzebub does not call God *eternal* King for, if He were so, His throne could not have been endangered—but perpetual King is one reigning only from time immemorial without interruption.

133. **Fate**—another reference to fate, implying that Fate is superior to God (essentially a Greek conception).

137. **Horrible destruction**—Beelzebub qualifies 'destruction in the next line. The empyreal substance of the angels (though fallen) cannot suffer any destruction He means that a great disaster has overwhelmed them. Note that Beelzebub does not minimise the calamitous overthrow and defeat of the angels.

138. **Gods**—the angels are identified with classical gods. **Heavenly essences**—spiritual beings.

140. **Vigour soon returns**--being made of imperishable substance, they soon repair their strength.

141. **All over glory extinct**—being made of imperishable fading or the splendour with which these angels were originally clothed. Satan notices it in Beelzebub and admits that he is himself changed in outward lustre.

146. **Have left......entire**—have left our spirit and strength intact.

146-47. **Have left......pains**—Satan maintains that his will remains unconquered so that he may pursue his revenge upon God.

Beelzebub who seems to be more of a realist, argues that God may have left their will and strength unimpaired that they may go through the severest penalty that God might inflict upon them. There is also this difference between Satan and Beelzebub : Satan claims equality with God and thinks God no more powerful than himself, but Beelzebub acknowledges the superiority of God who, therefore, in his opinion, may afflict the fallen angels the worst.

150. **By right of war**—as victor, God may claim from us the services of conquered slaves.

151. **To work in fire**—to work in fire in hell will be the worst of their afflictions and, Beelzebub implies, it all depends on the will of their conqueror.

155. **To undergo eternal punishment**—Beelzebub implies that their will and strength remain unimpaired, not that they might carry on unending hostilities with God but that they might suffer the unending punishment that God would inflict on them.

Lines 156-91. Satan is rather upset by the tone and trend of Beelzebub's speech. He responds quickly so that he might restore Beelzebub's faith and courage. He declares that their purpose will be to fight good with evil and thus to defeat God's purpose. Satan now sets forth to rally the rest of his followers.

156. **With speedy words**—Satan's intellectual prominence is indicated here. He is aware of the demoralizing effect of defeat, which is already shown in Beelzebub's speech. He must counteract it at onee and allowing little time to his followers to pause and ponder on the situation, he must rally them at once and put them into action.

157. **Cherub**—Cherubs are an order of angels, next in rank to Seraphs.

157-58. **To be weak......suffering**– Beelzebub says that their will and their strength which remain intact, are curse, for they will invite eternal suffering. Satan replies that it is an advantage to have their strength entire, for whether they are to act or suffer, it is a miserable thing to be weak. It has been pointed out above that Satan is a good dialectician.

159. **To do aught good etc.**—Satan sets forth his purpose and plan to action against God.

161. **As being......will**—Evil will be Satan's chief weapon against God. Satan now realises that open war is out of question henceforth, therefore, the war between God and Satan will be war between good and evil.

165. **Out of good . ...evil**—our task will be to find out the means of converting good into evil.

167. **If I fail not**—if I mistake not. Lat, *in fallor*.

167-68. **Disturb......aim**—divert their dearest purposes from their intended effect.

170. **His ministers... pursuit**—"sulphurous hail" and thunder. It has been said above that Satan and his angels fell from heaven in a flaming track. They were followed by a torrent of flame and by thunder down from heaven to hell.

171. **Sulphurous hail**—(1) hail shower of fire ; (2) fiery hail.

176. **His**—for its. *Its* was coming into *use* in Milton's time. Milton uses *its* only thrice.

182. **Livid**—of bluish leaden colour, the effect of intense heat. The blueness may be due to the presence of sulphur in hell which burns with a blue flame.

183. **Pale and dreadful**—the light shed by the livid flames is dim and phantomlike. **Tend**—direct our steps. Lat. *Tendere.*

191. **If not... dispair**—an instance of condescension. The construction is : If we cannot gain any reinforcement from hope let us consult what resolution we may gain from despair. Satan means here resolution which is born of very despair.

Lines 192-241. Satan, as he lies prone on the fiery waves, is compared to various huge creatures (illustrating Milton's habit of dilating the reader's imagination). He is free to work his evil designs that he may bring on himself the greater wrath of God. Now he rises from the lake and wings his way to land which burns with solid fire. Beelzebub also follows him.

198. **Titanian or Earth-born**—In Greek mythology the Titans were the children of Uranus and Ge (Heaven and Earth). At the instigation of their mother, they rose against their father (Uranus) and made Gronos ruler of the universe in their stead. The Titans also warred with Jupiter, and Jupiter hurled them into Tartarus (the place of punishment in Hades). The *Earthborn* were known as *Giants* (they were also children of Heaven and Earth). Hercules helped Jupiter in subduing the giants.

199. **Briareos or Typhon**—Briareos was neither a Titan nor a Giant. He had 100 hands and 50 heads. He fought on the side of Jupiter against the Titans. Typhon had 100 serpent heads, with mocking tongues and fire-flashing eyes. Jupiter struck him down with his thunderbolt, and buried him below Mt. Aetna.

201. **Leviathan**—though Leviathan, first mentioned in *Job xli*, i, is considered by some of the best Biblical critics to be the *crocodile*, from the mention of scales, yet it is evident that Milton here means the *whale*, as the crocodile is not found on the Norway coast, and is too small and agile an animal to answer the description here.

"In Hebrew mythology, leviathan is the monster that brings about eclipses by swallowing the sun and moon in its capacious mouth thus corresponding to the demon *Rahu* in Hindu mythology."

202. **Ocean stream**—a Homeric phrase. The early Greeks regarded the earth as a circle, encompassed by a perpetually flowing river. This was the *ocean stream.*

203. **Norway foam**—Milton means either the North Sea or the Atlantic Ocean.

204. **Night-foundered**—benighted (prevented by the darkness of night from preceding).

205. **Oft, as seamen tell**—*N. B.* The story rests on the authority of Olaus Magnus, whose *History of the Northern Nations* was translated into English in 1658, and on Hakluyt.

206. **Scaly rind**—a poetic figure to express the rough, wrinkled hard skin of the leviathan.

207. **Under the lee**—the lee shore is that on which the wind blows: the phrase means close under the weather shore, therefore, the sheltered side.

210. **Chained... lake**—The chains fall off as soon as Satan regains consciousness. The point is that Satan is permitted by God to exercise his own free will in doing evil thus incurring the greater wrath of God.

223. **Driven... . spires**—Note here the effect of the condensed picture. Satan rises from the fiery lake, the waves roll back and rise in the form of a slope with a apering end.

224. **Horrid vale**—a gapping valley, "Horrid" is a favourite word with Milton. Sometimes it is used without special signification.

232. **Pelorus** ancient name of Cape Faro, the northeast corner of Sicily.

233. **Thundering Aetna**—a Virginian epithet.

234. **Fuelled**—containing combustible matter.

235. **Sublimed**—"converted by heat into vapour in order that it may become solid again in a purer form."—*Masson.* **Sublimed with mineral fury**—Milton is describing here volcanic eruption. There is commotion in the interior of the earth, generated by heat. 'Mineral fury refers to the forcible ejection of lava or molten matter, rock fragments, ashes, and various gases.

230-37. *Exp.* **And such appeared......smoke**—The dry land on which Satan steps, is illustrated here by means of a simile. It is a mass of solid fire. Milton finds a fit comparison for it is in a volcanic eruption. The forces underground may uproot a hill from Pelorus (on the north-east coast of Sicily), or tear off a rock fragment from the Aetna (as wind and heat cause a commotion in the interiors, leaving exposed to view a surface, involved in smoke and smell. The dry land of hell has the same devastated appearance.

238. **Unblest feet**—The feet of Satan who is unblest *i. e.,* has been condemned by God to dwell in Hell.

239. **Stygian flood**—The *Styx* is a river of Hades in Greek mythology, the phrase is used for fiery lake of hell.

241. **Sufferance**—permission. **Supernal**—heavenly.

240-41. **As gods.....power**—The point is that God permits them to be as large so that they may pursue their own mischievous purposes. They, on the other hand, imagine that they have freed themselves from captivity by their own efforts as if they were gods and had the same freedom as gods. They are unaware that they own their freedom of action and movement to God.)

Lines 242-80. Another speech of Satan. He seems to be partly reconciled to his new abode. He comforts himself that he would rather reign as the lord of hell. After all, place or circumstance can little affect, his mind. He prefers 'reigning in hell to serving in heaven.' He proceeds now to summon the rest of his companions from their trance.

243. **Lost**—(1) bereft of heaven : (2) damned.

244-45. **This mournful gloom......celestial light**—Must we have this mournful gloom in exchange for that celestial light ? Note that Satan yearns again and again for the region of light and glory in heaven.

246-47. **Bid what shall be right**—order the things as he thinks fit. What shall be right or wrong depends on Him. Here Satan practically admits the superiority of God—and attributes to God arbitrary will and power.

249. **Above his equals**—Here Milton makes Satan a Republican like himself. Satan was the mouthpiece of democracy in heaven. He has managed to gather power into his hands.

250. **Horrors**—abode of horrors.

252. **Receive thy new possessor**—"So Ajax calls one Darkness and Erebus to receive him."—*Sophocles.*

253. **A mind .....time**—Satan again asserts the integrity of himself.

254. **Its own place**—Note the use of *its* here. **The mind...... place**—*i.e.*, the mind can be independent of time and place.

254-55. **And in itself... ..of Heaven**—the mind is independent of circumstances. It can convert heaven (*i. e.*, a state of happiness) into hell (*i. e.*, a state of misery), and hell into heaven. Satan here expresses the Stoic doctrine, according to which, the mind is above pain and sorrow. *N. B.* It must be understood that there is a conflict in Satan's mind. A few lines above, he yearns for heaven. Now he says that he does not mind that he is in hell, that he can rise above his surroundings. It is but an attempt to reconcile himself to his present abode—making the best of the bad job.

256. **If I be still the same**—he takes his stand on the personal integrity of the self.

257. **All but less than he**—Two constructions are involved : (1) all but equal to him ; (2) only less than he. Satan means he is almost equal to God—next to God in power and intellect.

258. **Whom.....greater**—he means to say that thunder has given God a superiority over him.

259-60. **The Almighty......envy**—Hell is not such a place that

God will grudge our possession of it. Satan means that God will let him alone in hell (*i. e.*, leave him free to carry on his own way).

262. **To reign..... Hell**—The point is this : Satan is ambitious of reigning as a lord ; since he cannot reign in heaven as its lord, he prefers to reign in hell. Ambition is the keynote of Satan's character.

266. **Astonished**—astounded. Literally, struck by thunder. **Oblivious**—causing forgetfulness. Satan attributes the insensibility (leading to a forgetfulness of their natural dignity) of the angels the effect of the fiery lake. Milton may have in mind the *Lethe* (the river of forgetfulness) of Greek mythology.

269. **With rallied arms**—having rallied our forces and armed ourselves.

Lines 271-82. Beelzebub is now in a more hopeful attitude. He pays a tribute to Satan's qualities of leadership. He believes that the fallen angels will rally round Satan again and will be prepared to be engaged in any enterprise.

274. **Their liveliest pledge**—the most heartening assurance.

276. **Perilous edge**—used like *acies* in Latin, which not only means the edge of anything, but figuratively, an army drawn up in line of battle.

278. **Their surest signal**—*i e.*, the rallying cry which they obeyed unquestioningly.

280. **Grovelling**—(1) lying prone ; (2) in an abject condition.

Lines 281-313. Satan proceeds to the margin of the lake. His shield and his spear are described. Then he calls the prostrate angels. They are compared to leaves which strew the brooks in Vallombrosa or to the sedge that covers the Red Sea.

283-84. **He scarce .....shore**—before Beelzebub stops Satan proceeds towards the margin of the lake. Satan wishes to lose no time. He is aware that if his followers are allowed to remain inactive for long they will be good for no purpose. He must stir them up before they are demoralized.

285. **Temper**—degree of hardness and elasticity in steel.

286. **The board circumference**—Milton often affects an abstract term to describe a concrete object.

287-89. **Like the moon .....Fesole**—Milton goes one better than Homer. Archiles' shield is compared to the moon (*Iliad*, xix, 373) ; Satan's to the moon as seen through a telescope. **Orb**—disk. **The Tuscan artist**—Galileo. Milton visited Galileo in 1638, just after he had lost his eyesight.

291. **Spotty globe**—*i. e.* the moon's surface with the dark spot visible.

292. **To equal which**—is compared to which. The most of the larget ships would have looked like a wand beside Satan's spear.

296. **Marle**—a special kind of soil (calcareous) here used for soil generally.

297-98. **The torrid clime .....fire**—the burning flame of the region, fire above and below, scorched him.

299. **He so endured**—he was of such tough endurance.

301. **Entranced**—in a state of trance (equivalent to "astonished" in line 281).

303 **Vallombrosa**—Literally, the shady vale, a picturesque spot 18 miles east of Florence. It is still visited by strangers as it apparently was in Milton's time. This is the poet's third reference, in the course of a few lines, to his Italian journey. **Etrurian shades**--note again the abstract *shades* for trees.

305. **Orion armed**—The southern constellation is supposed to resemble a giant with a belt and sword. The ancients believed its rising and its setting to be attended with violent storms.

306. **Vexed**—set in commotion (Latin *vaxare*—Lucretius).

307. **Busiris**—An Egyptain King noted for his inhospitality to strangers. Hercules paid him a visit and slew him. He could not have been the Pharaoh (Egyptian King) whose fate is described in *Exodus*, xiv. adopted by Milton here. It was Meneptah II who persecuted the Israelites, but Memphis was not his capital. Though there are several inaccuracies in the passage, the effect and associations produced are wonderfully poetical. **Chivalry**—applied poetically to cavalry or horemen in general.

308. **Perfidious hatred**—because the Egyptian King first permitted the Jews to depart from Egypt, and then suddenly changing his mind, pursued them as fugitives, hoping to take them at a disadvantage.

309. **Sojourners**—in fact the Israelities "sojourned" here for 430 years. **Goshen**—The pastoral region between the Delta and the Desert, assigned to the Israelites on their first settlement in Egypt.

310-11. **Their floating carcases......chariot-wheels**—the total overthrow of the Egyptians presents a vivid picture better than which nothing could have suggested the rout of the rebel angels. *N.B.* Milton seems to have been profoundly impressed by the events, described in the 14th Chapter of *Exodus*—the triumphal passage of the Israelites over the Red Sea and the destruction of their enemy, the Egyptians. Milton refers to these incidents again in Book XII (205-14).

311-13. **So thick bestrown......change**—*N.B.* A typical epic simile as above. And Milton packs so many allusions and associations, remote and poetical, into it, just to impress upon us the abject and confounded condition of fallen angels.

Lines 314-30. Satan's fourth speech in which he expresses astonishment at the sight of the angels lying senseless and confounded. He desires to know whether they have chosen such a resting-place as a pleasant one or whether they are going to their enemy. He urges them to rise immediately, or they will lie prone there for ever.

317. **If such astonishment, etc.**—By "astonishment" is meant the state of being stunned and Satan cannot associate such state with angels who are immortal. Indirectly, Satan rebukes them for their supineness.

318. **Or have... ..place**—Now Satan addresses them in a sneering tone.

320. **Virtue**—military powers (from Lat, *uir*, man Skt. *vira.* hero). **For**—on account of.

321. **The vales of heaven**—"Blissful bowers of amarantine shade" (XI 77), which must be in Satan's mind or in the background of consciousness while he addresses his companions.

324. **Cherub**—The cherubs were traditionally angels of beauty and the Seraphs, angels of love. The schoolmen held that they were incapable of falling.

325-28. **Till anon ... dropping**—Satan urges that the abject condition in which they lie with no intention of reasserting their angelic spirit, will but provoke further distress and humilation from God. They must defy God's wrath if they are to live again.

326. **His swift pursuers**—Satan means God's thunder-bolts.

327. **Tread us down**—crush us down into absolute humility.

328. **Drooping**—languishing in spirit. **Linked**—chained.

330. **Awake arise etc.**—*N. B.* Cowper writes: Of all the harangues that either history, or poetry has invented for commanders rallying their routed armies, none was better conceived than this. Satan seems himself astonished in the beginning of it but it is at their astonishment, which, though he sees it, he can hardly believe. Next affecting ignorance of the real cause of their inactivity, he imputes it to sloth and indolence, as if to stimulate them by derision. In the third place, to provoke and rouse them still more, he pretends to suppose it possible that they may be at that moment employed in worshipping the conqueror. Lastly, he uses solid argument, reminding them of the danger to which they expose themselves by such supineness, and finishes his exhortation with a line detached from the rest, and therefore so emphatical that while he utters it, we seem to hear the vaults of Hell re-echo :

'Awake, arise, or be for ever fallen !'

Lines 331-75. The angels as they lift themselves up are likened to the clouds of locusts that swept over the land of Egypt at the waving of Moses's rod. When they, alight on dry land, they are compared to the barbarian hordes that descended upon the plains of Europe and destroyed the Roman Empire. The name by which they were known in heaven being forgotten. Milton describes them by names which they received from their woshippers (pagans) on earth.

333. **On duty sleeping**—The simile of sentinels on guard neglecting their duty. **Whom they dread**—*i.e.*, one whom they dread.

334. **Rouse......themselves**—*i. e.*, shake themselves off their sleep.

335. **Nor... perceive**—*i. e.*, they perceived.

337. **Obeyed**—like French *obeira* ; therefore, intransitive. The intransitive use of *obey* does not occur again in Milton.

339. **Amram's son**—Moses. The poet avoids the too familiar name. **Evil day**—the time of the ten plagues that visited Egypt. The plague of the locusts was the eighth one.

340. **Coast**—region or border. **Up called**—summoned.

341. **Warping**—originally, a nautical word, meaning to haul a ship forward, by means of a cable. Here it seems to have been used of zigzagging flight of the locusts—rather a forced meaning. It might mean floating about at the mercy of the wind. **Eastern wind**—"The east wind brought the locusts" (*Exodus*. *x*. 13).

343. **The land of Nile**—an art description of Egypt. All beyond the floaded area of the Nile, there is rock or sand.

345. **Cope**—literally, hood or cape ; here vault.

346. **Twixt upper......fires**—*N. B.* There is fire above, beneath and around ; yet the fallen angels do not seem to be very much oppressed—at least they can transact all their business, deliberately planned as it is Either they have extraordinary powers of endurance or Satan's speeches have produced the necessary effect upon them (they rise in mind and spirit superior to their sufferings).

348. **Sultan**—The Sultan was the greatest enemy of the Christian nation at that time ; hence Milton deliberately uses the title.

349. **In even......light**—they descend in poised flight.

350. **Brimstone**—sulphur.

351 **Multitude**—The barbarian hordes (the Goths and Vandals and Huns) who descended upon the plains of Europe from the North. **Populous**—The fact is that the sterile regions of the North could not provide sufficient food for the growing population : and so the Teutonic migration to the South started.

355. **Beneath** - to the south of.

363. **Book of Life**—Bentley suggested "Book of Life". There are several references to such a book both in Old and New Testaments. In *Exodus*, xxxii, 32, Moses beseeches God to blot out his name from the "Book he has written," rather than destroy His people. The names by which these angels were known in heaven, were blotted out from heavenly records because they had rebelled against God.

364. **Sons of Eve**—mankind.

366. **For the trial of Man**—*N. B.* It is suggested that though man was forbidden to eat the fruit of the tree of knowledge, he had freedom of choice : hence the testing of Adam by Satan, which could not have taken place without God's permission. Compare the follo-

wing passage from *Areopagitica* : "Many there be that complain of *Divine* Providence for suffering Adam to transgress, Foolish Tongues! When God gave him freedom to choose : for reason is but choosing : he had been *else* a mere artificial Adam, such an Adam as he is in the motions."

367. **Falsities**—impostures or fakes (to be distinguished from *lies*). **The greatest part**—*viz.*, the gentile (non-Jewish) word.

368. **Corrupted**—seduced.

368-69. **Forsake..... Creator**—*i. e.*, renounced the true God for the false gods.

369-71. **The invisible Glory..... brute**—*i. e.* convert God who is invisible and formless into the image of a brute which they worshipped in place of the true God. *N. B.* The worship of false gods or idolatory is explained by Milton just to suit the purpose of his epic. He makes the fallen angels responsible for it. He represents them leaving Hell and taking up their abode on earth that they might turn away men's mind from God, and set themselves up in his place. St. Paul who condemns idolatrous practices maintains that men turned away from the true God of their own free will and took to idolatory.

372. **Gay religions**—gorgious rites.

373. **Devils to adore**—"They sacrificed to devils, not to God." (*Deut.* xxxii, 17).

Lines 376-521. The leaders among the fallen angels are named accordingly as they were known among their worshippers. Most of these fallen angels to have set themselves up in the countries bordering on the Holy Land. Here are, therefore, the names of deities, worshipped in Syria, Babylonia and Egypt.

377. **Slumber**—stupefaction.

380. **Promiscuous**—undistinguished.

383. **The seat of God**—the holiest spot on earth.

384. **Gods adored**—as gods adored.

385. **Abide**—Confront.

386. **Thundering out of Sion**—Thunder is the voice of Jehovah, and Sion is the secret place of thunder. There may be a reference to the Ten Commandments, (one of which forbade idolatory) which were delivered in the midst of thunder.

386-87. **Throned between the Cherubium**—The two figures of wrought gold, which were placed on the mercy seat of the lid of sacred ark in the Holy of Holies.

388. **Shrines**—altars.

389. **Abominations**—idolatrous practices.

390. **Profaned**—defiled ; desecrated.

391. **Affront**—meet face to face (not the idea of insulting).

392. **Horrid king**—Moloch is *horrid* because of the sacrifice of the first-born male children at his worship. In Israel, a father had

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the power of life and death over his children ; so there was nothing to prevent the staunch-worshipper of Moloch from sacrificing his children to him.

393. **Parent's tears** –there were unwilling parents too, and they shed tears.

394-96. **Though..... idol**—The cries of children who were passed through fire to Moloch were drowned by the noise of drums and timbrels. **The Ammonite**—collectively used. The Ammonites were distantly related to the Israelites. They lived on the East of the Jordan. Rabba was their chief city.

399. **Arnon**—flows into the Dead Sea.

400. **Audacious**—should go with Moloch. He was audacious (daring) to set himself up in the very neighbourhood where Jehovah was worshipped. **The wisest heart**—*i. e.*, Solomon who was known to be the wisest of kings of Israel, was corrupted by Moloch.

402. **Right against**—the Mount of Offences stood right against the Temple hill with the valley of the Kidron in between.

403. **Opprobrius hill**—the Mount of Oliver, near Jerusalem ; also known as the Mount of Corruption, and in later times, the Mount of Offences. Here Solomon built three shrines for strange gods. *Opprobrious* because it brought reproach upon the Israelites. **Grove**—*N. B.* Groves existed for the worship of Baal and Ashtareth and not of Moloch. Milton mixes up the two.

404. **Valley of Hinnom**—a deep narrow ravine bounding Jerusalem on the south-west. **Tophet**—the south-eastern part of the valley. Tophet was the place where the children were offered in sacrifice. The word is explained as (1) a place of drummming ; (2) a place of spitting.

405. **Gehenna**—from *Ge Hinnom—i. e.*, Valley of Hinnom. The bones of children sacrificed lay strewn there. Later the refuse of the city was deposited there. Still later it was identified with the place of torment (*hence the type of Hell*).

406. **Chemos**—like Moloch, Chemos was worshipped with human sacrifices. **The obscene...... sons**—*i.e.*, an object of dread to the Moabites. *Obscene* because of human sacrifices. Misha, the King of Moab, ascribed to Chemos the victories he won over Israel *2 Kings, iii*).

407. **From Aroer to Nebo**—The land of Moab lay south of Ammon and west of the Dead Sea. The names are taken from *Isaiah, xv* and *xvi*. **Aroer**—small town on the Arnon. **Nebo**—a part of the range of Abarim, the summit known as Pisgah.

408. **Abarim**—"Get thee up into this mountain of Abarim, unto Mount Nebo, which is in the land of Moab, that is over against Jerciho" (*Deut., xxxi*, 48. Some of the names mentioned here are untraced—*Heronaim, Sibma etc.* **Hesebon**—the city of Sehon, the king of Amorites.

411. **Eleale**—about a mile from Hesebon. **Asphaltic Pool**—the Dead (from the asphalt or mineral Pich said to be found floating on its surface).

412. **Peor**—"The local deity of Mt. Peor" worshipped by the Moabites ; Milton wrongly identifies Peor with Chemos. **Enticed**—the daughters of Moab *enticed* the Israelites to the worship of Peor.

414. **Wanton rites**—wild excesses which attended worship of these deties. **Which .....woe**—because all the idolators were slain.

415. **Orgies**—(1) Nocturnal festivities held in honour of Bacchus ; (2) Secret rites practised in the worship of a god ; (3) Revelry or debauchery.

416. **Hill of Scandal**—the Mount of Offence.

417. **Homicide**—killer. **Lust hard by hate**—Moloch is the type of hate and Chemos is the type of lust. Hate and lust are closely allied. Compare : "Murder 's as near to lust as flame to smoke" (*Pericles I*, i. 138).

418. **Good Josiah**—Josiah, King of Judah, stamped out all idolatrous practices and demolished all local temples.

419. **The bordering flood**—the Euphrates.

420, **The brook that parts**—In the Bible it is called "the river of Egypt" (*Gen* , *xy*. 18). It rises south of Mt. Sinai and falls into the Levant almost midway between Pelusium and Goza.

422. **Baalim**—W.R. Smith says that "the world Baal is not the proper name of one deity, but an appellative noun meaning 'lord' or 'owner'. The tribes of the North followed the Semitic fashion of reverencing a pair of divinities, masculine and feminine.

425. **Uncompounded**—free from admixture. **Essence**—that which makes them what they are.

426. **Manacled**—restricted in their movements.

429. **Dilated or condensed**—*i. e.*, in any shape, big or small. **Bright or obscure**—visible or unvisible.

430. **Execute ...purposes**—*i. e.*, carry out their purposes independently of any material agency. **Aery purposes**—air is their proper element. There was once a popular belief that the air is infested with malignant spirits.

433. **Their living**—Jehovah, "the Strength of Israel" (*I Sam*., *v*. 29).

435. **Bestial gods**—For example, the calf worship in the wilderness and the Northern Kingdom to be referred to presently.

436. **Bowed......battle**—for turning away from their true God, the Israelites suffered defeats in the battle with their enemies.

437. **Despicable foes**—such as the Philistines. *N. B.* The Israelites were several times subjugated by the Philistines. Milton writes (*Second Defence of the People of England*) : "It usually happens, by the appointment, and, as it were, retributive justice of the

Deity that the people who cannot govern themselves and moderate their passions, but crouch under the slavery of their lusts should be delivered upto the sway of those whom they abhor, and made to submit to an involuntary servitude." **With these in troop**—see line 413.

438. **Astoreth**—worshipped in Phoenicia.

439. **Astarte**—the correct form of the word. The Biblical writers seemed to have distorted the word in order to bring it into contempt. Astarte was a moon-goddess, and is called the "Queen of Heaven" in *Jer.*, vii, 18 ; the woman of Judah offered her cakes. **With crescent horns**—She was represented with the lunar crescent on her head.

441. **Sidonian Virgins** – Phoenician maidens. Sidon was the original capital of Phoenicia. **Paid their vows and songs**—paid their vows and sung songs.

442. **In Sion......unsung**—Milton says that the worship of Astarte was worshipped on the offensive mountain already referred to.

444. **Uxorious king**—Solomon who had a multitude of foreign wives. These women corrupted the heart of the wisest king.

445-46. **Fell to idols foul**--Solomon took to idolatry through the influence of his wives. **Thammuz**—a Phoenician god, beloved of Astarte. Thammuz was said to have been killed by a boar while hunting in the forest of Lebanon, and the river Adonis ran with blood from his wounds. Wailing and lamentation formed part of worship of Thammuz. His wound was yearly renewed. Adonis is a natural myth. Adoins was sun in his summer and in his winter course, in his time of triumph and in his time of defeat ; but in his time of triumph still moving towards his defeat, in his time of defeat still returning towards his triumph."—Matthew *Arnold*.

448. **The Syrian damsels**—compare : "In vain the Syrian maids their wounded Thammuz mourn" (*Nativity Ode*, 204). Women were the principal worshippers of Thammuz.

449. **A Summer's day**—Thammuz was worshipped on the 2nd day of the 4th month, corresponding to June. The day was called "a day of weeping."

452. **The love-tale**—The love-story of Thammuz and Astarte.

453. **Infected Sion's daughters**—allured and corrupted the Israelite women. **Heat**—passion or grief for the fate of Thammuz.

455. **Ezekiel**—Ezekiel, who had been in captivity at the time beheld, from the Chebar, a confluent of the Euphrates as if by second sight the idolatrous worship in the precinct of the temple at Jerusalem. "Then he brought me to the door of the gate of the Lord's house and behold, there sat women weeping for Thammuz." (*Ezek*, viii. 14).

457. **Alienated**—turned away from Jehovah.

452-57. *Exp.* **The love-tale......Judah**—Thammuz, originally a Phoenician god, and the beloved of Astarte, came to be introduced into Judah. There is the story that Thammuz was killed by a wild boar while hunting, mourned by Astarte. The wound was believed to have renewed every year and the river Adonis ran red with his blood. Phoenician maidens worshipped Thammuz with a good deal of weeping and lamentation. Soon the Jewish women caught the taint. Ezekiel, a prophet who had been carried into captivity in the time of Nabuchadnezzar, saw in a vision the Jewish women weeping for Thammuz in the sacred precincts of the temple at Jerusalem. The Jews had turned away from their true God Jehovah, and it was no wonder their women should take up the idolatrous practices of their neighbours.

458. **Mourned in earnest**—*N. B* The incident is this : "The Philistines, having defeated the Jews in battle took possession of the sacred ark. They set up the ark by the side of their own god Dagon in his temple in Azotus. Next morning the priests found that the head of Dagon and both the palms of his hands were cut off the threshold (*Grunsel edge*, 46) : only the stump of Dagon was left to him" (*I Sam*, v, 4). **Ark**—The oblong box containing the covenant or tales or tales of the law, kept in the Holy of Holies in the Jewish Tabernacle, and later placed in the Temple of Solomon (*Exod.* 25).

459. **His brute image**—the brutish image of the Phoenician god, Dagon. Milton represents him as a fish-god. In Hebrew, *dagom* means corn, and many suppose Dagon to be a god of agriculture.

460. **Grunsel-edge**—threshold.

464-66. **Reared in Azotus .....bounds**—The five cities mentioned here formed the Philistine League. They lay in a fertile region between Judah and the Mediterranean Sea.

467. **Rimmon**—literally, god of the winds. A Syrian deity.

469. **Abbana and Pharphar**—the two rivers were blocked by the desert, and did not reach the sea.

470 **He also .....bold** *i. e.*, He also alienated the Jews from their true God, Jehovah.

472. **Sottish**—stupid. **Conqueror**—*i. e.*, Conqueror of Damascus (but choosing to worship the god of Damascus— Rimmon). **He drew**—*i. e.*, Rimmon drew.

473. **Disparage**—dishonour by comparison with something inferior.

475-76. **Adore the......vanquished**—"In ancient modes of thought the people and their god were one. The people were but the reflection of their god, they were people of Chemosh or Milcom (*i. e.*, Moloch) or Jehovah. All wars were religious wars against a god who animated and gave strength to his people."

478. **Osiris, Isis, Orus**—Egyptian deities. According to the Egyptian mythology, Osiris and Isis were king and queen of Egypt

and Osiris's brother, Set rose against him and killed him. Osiris's boy was dismembered, and the parts were scattered through out the country. Isis discovered them and erected a sanctuary over each. Then Isis and Orus made war upon Set and drove him out of Egypt. Osiris became king of the infernal regions. Isis was a popular deity both in Egypt and throughout the Roman Empire.

479. **Monstrous shapes**—Animals worship was a prominent feature of the religion of Egypt. Cats, jackals, crocodiles were all sacred creatures in Egypt. Many of the gods were represented with hybird forms (Orus had the head of a hawk).

480. **Fanatic**—originally, temple-loving or temple-haunting, and then wildly religious. There were many rival sects, which bred franticism in Egypt. **Her priests**—*N. B.* The priestly class exercised great influence in Egypt.

481. **Wandering gods**—Ovid tells the story that the gods, when the gaints rose against them, fixed into Egypt and disguised themselves as animals. Egyptian mythology notes that when there was war between Set and Orus, the Egyptian gods similarly disguised themselves.

482-84. **Nor did Israel ..... Oreb**—*N. B.* The Jews were long held in captivity in Egypt and so became infected with the idolatrous practices of Egypt and of the Egyptians. When the Jew encamped under Mt. Sinai on their march across the desert after leaving Egypt, they desired some outward symbol of the Deity. They collected their golden ornaments, lately borrowed from their Egyptian masters, and gave them to Aaron, and Aaron made them into a molten calf. **The rebel king**—Jereboam who refused to recognise Rehoboam as king, and set ud a rival kingdom in the north of Palestine.

485. **Doubled that sin**—doubled Aaron's sin. He set up calf-worship at Bethel and Dan, one in the north, the other in the south.

486. **Likening......ox**—*i. e.*, representing God by an ox *N. B.* Calf-worship was known to the Jews and other races. It was an old Semitic customs. 'They wished, let us suppose, to have a visible representation of strength, and they could not picture abstract idea of *Abir*, mighty in a more obvious manner than by the immage of the Abir, the powerful ox." —*Robertson.*

487-89. **Jehovah......gods**—The reference is to the tenth plague, as the result of which all the first-born of man and beast were killed. Now the King of Egypt gave his consent to the Jews to depart from Egypt. **Equalled......stroke**—levelled in death. **Bleating**—one of the gods was represented as a ram, another as a goat, and the chief (Apis) as a bull.

490. **Belial**—an abstract term meaning worthlessness. In the New testament, Belial stands for anti-Christ—the "man of sin" "son of lawlessness", mentioned in 2 *Thess*, ii, 3. Belial seems to be a spirit different from those mentioned above. Athesim, jibertinism and wanton licence seems to be represented by Belia. **Lewd**—licentious.

491-92. **Gross itself**—*i. e.* coarse enough to revel in vice.

493. **Yet who more oft**—Belial no temples or altars for him—he seemed to have ruled the spirits of men. So Milton says that he made use of the temples of other gods

495. **Eli's sons**—Hophni and Phinehas. They are described as "sons of Belial." Their crime brought down the heirs of their aged father with sorrow to the grave (I *Sam* ii. 12-27).

497. **In courts......reigns**—"The Puritans called profligate nobles of the court of Charles II, sons of Belial, and Milton's picture of Belial begun here and completed in the Second Book, have been set for by more than of the king's friends."—*H. Morley.*

500. **Injury**—insult. **Injury and outrage**—*i. e.*, Their drunken revelry result in insult and violence to innocent people

501-02. **Son of Belial**—revellers (who are represented as the devotees of Belial. **Flown**—flushed. **With insolence and wine**—the idea of wine making them insolent.

503. **Witness......Sodom**—let the streets of Sodom bear witness. **Sodom**—see *Gen.* xix. Sodom and Gomorrah were two cities of the plains that were destroyed with and brimstone from heaven because of their wickedness.

504. **In Gibeah**—*Judges*, xix. **The hospitable door**—the house which received a stranger as a guest.

505. **Exposed ....rape**—to spare the guests, the "matron" was handed over to the lust-maddened people of Gibeah.

507. **The rest......tell**—it would be tedious to enumerate the rest.

508. **Ionian**—Greeks (from the tribe which inhabited the west coast of Asia Minor). **Javan's issue**—the Greeks being regarded as descended from *Javan* or *Ion*, son of Japhet.

509-10. **Yet confessed .....parents**—*N. B.* Heaven (Uranus) and Earth are claimed by the Greeks to be the parents of their gods. *Heaven* (Uranus) and *Earth* (Ge) in their union brought into the world twelve Titans, Ocaemus being the eldest and Cronos (or Saturn) the youngest. Under Saturn's leadership the children revolted against their parents. So Saturn seized the throne. He in his turn was replaced by Jove. It was always children rising against their parents. Milton, however, discredits the Greek version of the origin of their gods. He identifies the Greek gods with the fallen angels, and, therefore, they must have existed long before heaven and earth. **Titan**—Titan is not an individual god : it is an appellative, applying equally to any of the six sons and six daughters, of Heaven and Earth. Milton turns Greek mythology topsy-turvy. Evidently, Milton puts Titan for Oceanus. Saturn rose against his parents and not against Oceanus.

513. **His own and Rhea's son**—Rhea was Saturn's sister, and Jove was their son. **Like measure found**—Jove treated Saturn in the

same way as Saturn treated his brother (Titan, as Milton puts it). "This 'Uranus myth' is practically unknown to Homer, so that modern scholars are divided as to whether these of violence and wrong on the part of the gods—the son dethroning the father, the brother supplanting the brother, stronger banishing the weaker—are survivals of primitive, savage beliefs (for the Greeks like other people, emerge from the savage state) or are worthless fabrication of later Greek writers."

515. **Ida**—a mountain in Crete. Rhea, when about to give birth to Zeus, took shelter here lest Saturn might devour the child, as he had done before.

516. **Olympus**—a mountain in Thessaly and the fabled abode of the Greek gods. **Middle air**—the *media regio* of the medieval physics—the region of cloud and cold.

517. **Their highest heaven**—the highest heaven for the Greeks, but it must be lower than the "empyrean" of Milton's poem. **Delphian cliff**--the seat of the oracle of Apollo, on the southern slope of Mt. Parnassus.

518. **Dodona**—the oldest oracle of Zeus, in Epirus.

519. **Doric land**—Peloponnesus.

520. **Adria**—the Adriatic. **Hesperian fields**—Italy.

521. **The Celtic**—the Celtic fields *i.e.*, France. **The utmost isles**—the British Isles, the farthest limit of the geographical horizon of the ancients.

Lines 522-526. Satan puts courage into the hearts of his followers with his stirring words and as Azazel raises the imperial standard, there is deafening shout. They are more numerous than all the armies ever assembled on earth. Satan looks a ruined archangel. The devotion of his followers is touching to him and he often chokes in his utterance.

522-26. **But with looks .....itself**—After Satan's speech had effect upon his followers, they rallied round him ; they were depressed in spirits, but there was a gleam of joy in their eyes, for they found that their chief was not given to despair. They could depend on their chief who still wished to wage war with god. They were not, therefore, irretrievably lost.

527. **Doubtful hue**—look of joy crossed with grief.

528. **Recollecting**—recovering.

529. **Semblance of worth**—mere appearance of reality or truth.

534. **Azazel**—in Hebrew means '*Scapegoat*'.

536. **Advanced**—uplifted.

538. **Emblazed**—adorned.

539. **Arms**—armorial bearings. **Trophies**—spoils of victory.

540. **Sonorous metal**—trumpet.

542. **Tore Hell's concave**—rent the vault of Hell.

543. **Reign**—kingdom. **Old Night**—because night existed from eternity before the creation of the world. Chaos is here the king of Chaos and Night his consort.

546. **Orient**—(1) Eastern ; (2) Bright, like the dawn.

547. **Helms**—*i.e.*, fallen angels wearing helmets.

548. **Serried**—interlocked.

550. **Phalanx**—a compact body of troops. **Dorian mood**—solemn music. There were three measures of music among the Greeks—(1) *Dorion*, gave and solemn ; 2) *Lydian*, soft and plaintive, (3) *Phrygian*, wild and warlike.

551. **Recorders**—small pipes.

552. **Noblest temper**—there is the idea of balanced and steady courage (and not a dare devil spirit).

554. **Deliberate valour**—(1) calculated courage ; (2) courage supported by strength of will or purpose. **Breathed**—inspired. **Unmoved**—immovable.

556. **Not wanting**—refers to the music. **Swage**—assuage.

557. **Touches**—strains.

560. **Breathing......thought**—*i.e.*,—united by a common purpose or will.

561-62. **Charmed... . soil**—made them insensible to the pain of walking on the burning soil.

563. **Horrid**—bristling.

564. **Guise**—manner.

565. **Ordered spear**—from the idea of soldiers resting the butt-ends of their muskets on the ground : the spears being so placed would rise above the heads of the angelic host, and thus present a "horrid front."

568. **Traverse**—from side to side.

572 **Hardening......strength**—etting tougher with his consciousness of strength.

573. **Since created Man**—since the creation of man. Latin, *Past hominem creatum*.

574. **Embodied**—organised. **Named**—matched.

575 **Small infantry**—pygmies. *N. B.* The pygmies were assailed by the cranes every spring (Homer, *Iliad*, iii 3, 3-6).

577. **Phlegra**—literally, the place of burning. The battle between the gods and giants place at Phlegra. Phlegra is commonly identified with Pallence in Thrace.

578. **Thebes**—*N. B.* Aeschylus's *Seven against Thebes* tells the story of Polynices the banished king of the city, who fell fighting before the walls with his heroic companions who had come to his help. The war was renewed by their descendants, *Epigoni*, ten years

later and they finally captured the city. **Ilium**—Troy which was burnt down by the Greeks after ten years' siege.

579. **Auxiliar gods**—In Troy, the gods fought either on the side of the Troyans or on the side of the Greeks.

580. **Uther's son**—King Arthur.

581. **Armoric knights**—*i.e.*, knights from Britanny.

582. **Baptized or infidel**—Christian or Saracen.

583. **Jousted**—to part in tournaments. **Aspramont**—In Italy. **Montalban**—the castle of Knight Renaud, Guienne, France.

584. **Damasco**—Medieval name of Damascus. **Trebisond**—a city of Asia Minor. It took part in the Crusades and maintained its independence against the Turks till 1462.

585. **Biserta**—a city of Tunis in Africa.

587. **Fontarabbia**—a fortress in the Spanish Province of Guipuzcoa.

585-87. *Exp.* **Or whom Biserta......Fontarabbia**—The Saracens defeated the armies of Charlemagne. They crossed over from Biserta into Spain. The battle was fought in 778 at Roncevalles where the famous Roland was slain and the rearguard of Charlemagne's was cut to the pieces. By mistake Milton puts Fontarabbia for Roncevalles.

587-88. **Beyond......prowess**—not to be measured by comparison with human courage and strength. **Observed**—watched and obeyed.

601. **Intrenched**—furrowed.

603. **Considerate**—should be explained as "regardful for others," and not as "self-regarding." Satan's pride is manifested in regard to God, but he is all sympathy for his followers.

604-08. **But cast signs......pain**—*N. B.* Satan's heart goes out in sympathy to his accomplices in treason. Once he beheld them in full possession of heavenly bliss ; now they are condemned to perpetual torment. The reversal which they have suffered, fills Satan's heart with compassion.

609. **Amerced**—deprived of (for their act of rebellion).

611. **His**—emphatic. Satan is conscious that he is responsible for their loss of heavenly bliss and for the eternal torment to which they are now condemned. **Yet......Stood**—their faithfulness to Satan in spite of their being flung into eternal torment for Satan's ambition, is very touching Satan fully appreciates it.

612. **Heaven's fire**—lightning.

613. **Scathed**—injured by blasting or withering up.

614. **Growth**—stature attained by growing.

616. **Doubled ranks**—"A true description of military movement ; as if from Milton's actual recollection of parades he had seen in the time of Civil Wars."

619. **In spite of scorn**—*i.e.*, though he hated himself for his lack of control.

Lines 622-62. Satan made out in his speech that the defeat they had suffered was not inglorious. They could not of course have foreseen it. But now they could be certain of redeeming their defeat. Defeat had made them realise the full strength of their enemy. They could now meet his strength with fraud. Satan had already a report about the creation of a new world. They would extend their operations there. Peace was unthinkable.

624 **The event was dire**—the result was disastrous.

626-30. **But what......repulse**—they could not have foreseen their defeat. How could such a united body of angels, even such as now stood before Saturn, have been defeated? They had erred in judgment. So it is implied that they should be more cautious in the future.

632 **Puissant**—powerful. **Legions**—innumerable troops.

632-633. **Whose......Heaven**—Satan implies that the banishment of the angels from heaven has reduced the number of angels in heaven and must have left heaven weaker.

634. **Self-raised**—exalted by their own merits and exertions.

631-34. **For who can yet ...seat**—After their defeat and after all that they had suffered, and were still suffering, as Satan says, it was still difficult for them to believe that they would ascend to heaven again and win back their places in heaven.

636. **Counsels different**—*i. e.*, disagreement in views. **Danger shunned**—the shunning of perils.

636-37. **If counsels......hopes**—for their defeat the angels cannot certainly charge Satan with having pursued a policy, contrary to the agreed opinion or with having avoided any personal danger.

637-42. **But he who reigns .... fall**—*N. B* Here Satan points out to his followers that defeat has given them more experience. The ruler of heaven until they fought against him did not anticipate any danger. All this time old reputation, consent of the angels and prevailing custom, enabled him to exercise his supreme power not challenged until then. All this time, the angels did not have any idea of the measure of his strength. Satan means that ignorance of the real strength of God (which they could know only when they challenged his power) let to their defeat. It had been seen above that Satan attributed their defeat to God's thunder. 'His strength concealed' must be then the thunder. **Tempted our attempt**—revoked our revolt. Not the pun here. **Wrought our fall**—brought about our expulsion from heaven.

643. **Henceforth......own**—Satan wants to convince them that they are now in a better position to fight because they know how powerful God is and they know also their own relative strength.

645. **Better part**—*i. e.*, safer course of action.

646. **Close**—secret.

646-47. **By fraud......not**—what they could not achieve by strength, they were going to achieve by craft. **No less**—no less than if we used force. Craft would make them equal with God, if force could not.

648-49. **Who overcomes......foe**—force is not the only factor in winning victories. Satan also implies that the greatest victors are those who win the hearts of those whom they have conquered. Their defeat has left them "irreconcilable to their grand foe." Their irreconcilability is their greatest source of strength. *N. B.* Satan is very good at arguing plausibly.

650. **Space ...worlds**—new worlds may evolve from space. *N. B.* Satan seems to take a scientific view, and deny God's act of creation. **Rife**—current.

651. **Fame**—report.

653. **Generation**—race. **Choice regard**—*i. e.*, his partiality.

654. **Sons of Heaven**—angels. **Favour......Heaven**—that the new generation, to be created by God, should be made equal to angels is also a good reason to excite Satan's envy.

656. **To pry**—to Keep in. **If but to pry**—he first suggests that he is going to have a reading of the situation first, and later formulate his plan.

657. **Our first eruption**—*i.e.*, we shall first break into that region. **Thither or elsewhere**—if not there, we shall attack God elsewhere—we shall discover another weak point in His dominion.

658. **Abyss**—chaos.

659-60. **But these thoughts......mature**—so the plan of action against God remains to be formulate after due deliberation. **Despaired**—despaired of.

661. **For who can think submission**—submission to God in any circumstance is unthinkable.

Lines 663-751. Satan's policy of unending war with God is greeted with enthusiasm. The angels, directed by Mammon, proceeded to build a council-hall. Some discover gold, others smell it, others again prepare a mould underground. The structure goes up as if by magic. It is of surpassing magnificence. The architect is identified with Vulcan and Mulciber.

663. **To confirm his words**—as a token of their approval of his words.

664. **Flaming swords**—swords not simply flashing, but swords made of fire. "Their swords flame not metaphorically, but they are swords of fire ; they flash not by reflection......but by their own light and that light far round illumines Hell"—*Cowper.*

666. **Raged**—stormed and blustered.

668. **Clashed..... war**—"The known customs of the Roman soldiers when they applauded speech of their general, who to smite their shields with their swords."—*Bentley.*

670. **There stood a hill**—Note the chief features of Hell. First, there is the burning lake, then the dark or yellow main land bordering on it ; and now, on the main land there is the hill belching fire and smoke, and encrusted with lava.

672. **Scurf**—coating of scurf ; flaky matter.

674. **The work of sulphur**—the sulphur was understood by the alchemists as a vague 'principle of fixation', not the substance we call sulphur. So sulphur was the chief agent in the formation of metals by its action on the earth.

675. **Brigad**—brigade, a large body of troops.

676. **Pioneers**—originally, men who go on foot ; then those who clear the way for an army by making roads.

677. **Camp**—an army on campaign. **Trench a field**—fortify a battlefield with trenches.

678. **Cast**—throw up. **Mammon**—an abstract noun in Aromaic meaning *riches* ; here it becomes a proper noun—the god of riches.

679. **Erected**—The physical sense as well as the figurative : (1) because in heaven he always stooped to look at the gold pavement ; (2) high-minded : upright. Love of gold debased his mind.

682. **Trodden gold**—Homeric idea. "Now the gods as by Zeus and held assembly on the golden floor"—(*Iliad*. iv. 1).

684. **Vision beatific**—literally. sight that makes one happy. Schoolmen's phrase—*visio beatifica*. The phrase was used by early Christian writers to denote the 'sight of God, which gives perfect happiness.'

685. **Suggestion**—has the idea of temptation ; as in Shakespeare. **By his suggestion taught**—it might be an allusion to the common superstition among miners that the demons, known as *gnomes*, who are the guardians of mines.

686. **The centre**—*i. e.*, the earth. **Impious hands**—because they despoiled their own mother.

688. **For treasures better hid**—*i. e.*, for gold, better left undisturbed.

690. **Ribs of gold**—veins of gold. **Admire**—wonder.

692. **Precious bane**—*i. e.*, gold which is a curse to mankind.

693. **Mortal things**—the seven wonders of the world.

694 **Babel**—*i. e*, Babylon famous for its hanging gardens and its temple of Belus. **The works .....kings**—The pyramids which were the work of Egyptian kings. Memphis was the ancient capital of Egypt.

695. **Their**—*i. e.*, built by mortals.

697. **Reprobate**—depraved, literally, condemned. **In an hour**—*i. e.*, outdone in an hour.

698. **What..... incessant toil**—N. B. Herodotus says that

3,66,006 men were employed for twenty years in building the Great Pyramid.

703. **Founded**—melted. The process of purifying is called *smelting*; *founding* implies a later and final melting and moulding of the metal.

704. **Scummed**—skimmed. **Bullion**—unpurified metal · ore. **Bullion-dross**—the impurities in the ore, coming off on the surface of the molten metal.

706. **A various mould**—an intricate or elaborate mould—a hollow form into which molten metal is cast, and allowed to cool and harden.

709. **Row of pipes .....breathes**—The sound-board forms the upper part of the wind-chest from which all the pipes in an organ are supplied with wind. **Breathes**—sends forth air.

711. **Exhalation**—vapour or mist.

712. **Dalcet symphonies**—sweet accompanying chords or strains on instruments.

713. **Like a temple**—There were many temples in Greece and Asia Minor, of which the rows of phillars formed a conspicuous feature.

714. **Doric pillars**—round pillars of a massive simple style with plain capital.

715. **Architrave**—The beam or stone-work resting immediately on the top of a row of pillars; the *frieze* is the ornament above it, and above that is the projecting part, called the *cornice*.

716. **Bossy**—standing over prominently.

710-17. **Anon out of......fretted gold**—"The architectural terms used are exact. Pilasters are square pillars, generally sunk in the wall; Doric pillars are plain columns of the Doric order; architrave, friezo, and cornice are the successive parts of the entablature between the capital of the column and the roof—the frieze often bearing sculptured figures in relief.—*Masson.*

720. **Belus**—the tutelary god of Babylon. **Serapis**—a hybrid god; designed by Ptolemy Soter to meet equally the religious need of Egyptians and Greeks. The name was originally *Userhapi* a combination of *Osiris* and *Apis*.

721. **When Egypt......strove**—"We find at the dawn of history two great, centres of empire and civilization whose origins are lost in the twilight of extreme antiquity. One of these was in the lower valley and delta of the Nile, the other in the alluvium of the Euphrates—Tigris valley. In each case a broad tract of very fertile country nourished a dense population and produced that superfluity of the means of life which encourages luxury and makes the progress of the arts possible."—*W. Robbertson Smith.*

722. **The ascending pile**—the structure that rose.

724. **Folds**—folding doors. **Discover**—reveal.

728. **Cressets**—A cresset was a lamp consisting of a small, open, iron cage or vessel, in which was placed a rope or two steeped in pitch. It was usually carried hanging from the top of a pole.

729. **Naphtha**—a liquid distilled from petroleum ; used for the lamps. **Asphaltus**—pitch ; used for the cressets.

732. **His hand was known**—Mammon has been identified with Mulciber.

734. **Sceptred Angels**—Angels bearing the sceptre like a king. *N.B.* Milton was a Republican and justified the execution of Charles I. Yet, as he represents god and his angels, he establishes the very system of monarchy in heaven while he hates it on earth. Satan seems to be a Republican fighting against the autocracy of the monarch—God. There seems to be a strange irony in all this ! The very system of monarchy, whose end in England he applauds and justifies, he transfers to heaven.

735. **Princes**—The angels and vassal, princes, and God is "the supreme King"—just the feudal system which, as Milton thinks, can better and without censure flourish in heaven it should be ended on earth.

737. **Each in his Hierarchy**—There were three hierarchies of angels each including three Orders : the first includes Seraphim, Cherubim, Thrones ; the second, Domination, Virtues, Powers ; the third, Principalities, Archangels, Angels.

738. **Nor was his name**—"Milton is here speaking of a devil that exercised the founder's art ; and says he was not unknown in Greece and Italy. The poet has his choice of three names to tell us what they called him in the classic world. Hephaestus, Vulcan and Mulciber, the last only of which designating the office of a founder, he has very judiciously chosen."—*Warburton.*

739. **Ausonian land**—*i.e.*, Italy. Ausoni was an ancient name for Italy.

740. **Mulciber**—literally, the softener, the metalfounder. Latin, *mulcere*, to soften.

740-41. **How he fell......fabled**—As the Greek myth tells us. Mulciber interfered in a quarrel between Zeus and Hera. He was hurled down to earth by Zeus, and his fall took a whole day. Here is Homer's account : "yea......he caught me by my foot and hurled me from the heavenly threshold ; all day I flew, and at the set of Sun I fell in Lemnos, and little life was in me."

746. **Lemnos**—the island was sacred to Mulciber, and here he had his forge.

747. **Erring**—Milton wants to say that he fell from heaven much earlier as he was one of the rebel angels. The Greeks are, therefore, wrong in saying that he was hurled down from heaven by Jove.

750. **Engines**—contrivances.

Lines 752-798. The council now meets. The lesser angels crowd in, like bees in mid-spring, reducing, themselves to the smallest size. The greater angels keep their own form, and sit apart in secret conclave.

756. **Pandemonium**—the abode of all the demons.

763. **Covered field**—'covered' has been explained as *roofed,* or *closed in overhead.* It is better to explain as *enclosed,* as the list for tournaments.

764. **Wont ride**—were accustomed to ride. **Soldan**—sultan.

765. **Panim chivarly**—*i.e.,* Pagan knights.

766. **Mortal combat**—fight with pointed weapons, which could only end with the death or disablement of one or the adversaries. **Career with lance**—a fight with blunted lances ; *career* means a horse's swiftest gallop.

768. **Brushed... . wings**—*i.e.,* hissed with the brushing of rustling wings.

769. **When the Sun......rides**—when the Sun is passing through Taurus or the Bull, one of the signs of the Zodiac. *Rides*—suggests here the classical idea of the chariot and horses and therefore the word goes well with the Sun. Then, according to the Ptolemaic system, Taurus goes with rest of the celestial bodies round the Sun.

770. **Populous youth**—youthful populace.

771. **Dews and flowers**—dewy flowers.

774. **Balm**—resin or gum. **Expatiate**—walk about, literally, spread out. **Confer**—discuss.

774-75. **Expatiate ...state-affairs**—*N. B.* "Milton reveals an unwonted spirit of playfulness in the closing of this book ('state-affairs' is a touch worthy of the creator of *Lilliput*), but this distracts our minds from the gravity of the present situation—the "affairs" these angels are discussing, are concerned with the ruin of human race. Milton's departure in this place from that "high seriousness" which he shares with Dante and the other masters of the human mind makes us pause to consider whether he means the poem for truth or for fiction."

776. **Straitened**—*i.e.,* confined in too narrow a space.

779. **Dwarfs**—pygmies.

780-81. **Pygmean race .... mount**—*N. B.* The Greek historian Ctesias mentions such race of pygmies living beyond the Himalayas, called Imaus. They are known as *Kiratas* who were a race of dwarfs as compared with the invaders ; they were brave hunters, but they always suffered from the enmity of the mythical bird *Garuda.* **Faery elves**—They were supposed to hold their midnight revels on the green sword to disappear at the first streak of light.

786. **Wheels ...course** directs her part. *N. B.* The moon draws nearer in order to preside over and judge the game of the fairies. Above, the moon is called arbitress.

788. **Joy and fear**—The mortals might be irresistibly drawn to witness the fairy storts, but the fairies often disliked their inquisitiveness for which they had to pay dear—so both *joy* in witnessing the midnight revels of the fairies, and *fear* of being caught in their act of stealthy observation.

790. **Were at large**—*i. e.* had plenty of room.

791. **Without number**—innumerable.

793. **In their own dimensions**—*i.e.*, in their normal shapes.

795. **Recess**—secrecy. **Conclave**—used for the assembly where the cardinals sit under lock and key for the election of a new Pope. Milton used the word deliberately just to assimilate the cardinals to the devils.

797. **Frequent**—crowded.

798. **Summons read**—the reading of the summons. **Consult**—meeting for consultation.

●

MODEL EXPLANATIONS

(1) Of man's.........Muse. (*Lines 1-6*).

These are the opening lines of Milton's great epic poem *Paradise Lost*, Book I. Following the tradition of the great ancient epic poets like Homer and Virgil, Milton invokes the Heavenly Muse to inspire him to write a song of man's first act of disobedience and his subsequent fate.

Milton seeks the help and inspiration of the Heavenly Muse, also called Urania, to enable him to write about man's first act of disobedience to God. This act of disobedience was committed by man by tasting the fruit of the tree of knowledge. Adam and Eve lived in perfect bliss in Eden. However, they were subjected to one restraint, that they should not taste the fruit of the tree of knowledge. But tempted by Satan, they defied God's command. Their sin brought death and misery to mankind, including their expulsion from Paradise till much later the Son of God, i.e., Jesus Christ arrived and by his sacrifice on the cross helped man to atone to God for his sin. Christ showed him the way to redemption and salvation.

In keeping with the epic tradition, Milton states his subject at the very outset of the poem. For the accomplishment of this subject, he invokes the help of Heavenly Muse. It may be noted here that Milton being a devout Christian does not seek the help of any Greek or classical diety. He invents a Muse of his own, which he later calls Urania.

(2) Thou from.........God to man. (*Lines 19-26*). (*Imp.*)

These lines form a part of the Invocation at the opening of Milton's great epic poem, Paradise Lost, Book I. In keeping with the epic tradition, Milton invokes the help of the Heavenly Muse to enable him to complete his 'adventurous song' which intends to undertake a theme 'unattempted yet in prose or rhyme'. In order to explore the affairs of Heaven and Hell, Milton wants to take a lofty flight, for which he seeks the help of the Muse from her holy seats like moutain Horeb, or Sinai or Sion.

Milton being a great genius, is not satisfied with an invocation to the heavenly Muse only. His task is not an ordinary one. Therefore, he also seeks the aid of the Holy Spirit which together with the God and Christ makes the Trinity. Milton seeks the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, for his subject pertains to the secrets of Heaven with which the Holy Spirit is well acquainted. This spirit was present at the time of creation of the universe, when with her mighty and massive wings outspread she sat on the vast and vacant chaos to fill it with life as a dove hatches its eggs by sitting over them. Therefore, the Holy Spirit is the fittest creature to unfold to the poet all the secrets of creation. Further the poet calls upon this spirit to throw light on whatever is unknown to him and also to elevate whatever is low and base in him. As his subject is sublime, he needs enlightenment and elevation of soul. Only then he would be able to prove the wisdom of God's rule on the world and justify His actions to men. Milton wants to exhort that men should accept God's ways and actions instead of lamenting over their lot. All consequences which befall human beings are of their own making. Therefore, they should be prepared to accept their consequences because it is through acceptance and suffering patiently that they can hope for redemption. God is never unjust, even though His punishment is heavy. But His mercy is greater. It is not by challenging God but by bravely accepting his punishments that men can hope to get God's mercy and grace.

Milton was a Puritan. These lines, therefore, sufficiently reveal his staunch faith in God. His spirit of dedication and submission to God is apparent. Milton was of the view that his 'adventurous song' could reach completion only through devout prayer to that eternal spirit which alone can enrich a man with spiritual thoughts. Besides this, the last lines are autobiographical. Milton was blind when he wrote these lines. Morevover, it may also be noted that the poem begins in Hell, a region of utter darkness. Hence a spiritual illumination is self-explanatory.

(3) A dungeon........ unconsumed. (*Lines 61-69*).

These lines have been extracted from Milton's great epic poem *Paradise Lost* Book I. Milton tells how Satan was hurled headlong down to bottomless perdition to dwell in adamantine chains and penal fire of Hell. For some time Satan lay vanquished, but soon he surveyed his sorroundings with blazing eyes in which mixed feelings of affliction and hatred were visible.

When Satan threw his glance all around him, he found an utterly gloomy and desolate condition He saw a horrible pit which looked like a great flaming furnace. But the flames did not dispel the darkness of Hell, rather darkness was made visible by the light of the flames. Their gloomy light revealed only the sights of pain, abode of sorrow and gloomy shadows. In fact, Hell is the region where peace and rest do not exist, hope which may be found at all places is not to be found in Hell. Hell is a place of eternal torture. Here the flood of fire constantly keeps burning with an inexhaustible supply of sulphur.

These lines recall to the mind the lines in the Bible (Book of Job, 10 : 12) : "A land of darkness, as darkness itself, and of the shadow of death, without any order where the light is as darkness".

(4) **Yet not.........throne.** (*Lines 94-104*) (*Imp.*)

These lines have been taken from the first speech of Satan in Milton's great epic poem *Paradise Lost*, Book I. When Satan awakes from stupor in Hell, he looks all around him to find Beelzebub rolling in the fiery waves by his side. Satan pays a tribute to Beelzebub's fidelity that he is with him in misery with the same loyalty as he had always been with him in Heaven. Satan also admits that God had proved to be stronger than him by virtue of his mighty weapon of thunder.

But in this speech Satan declares that he is not going to give up his contest with God. He and his angels have been flung down from Heaven into Hell, when they are to dwell in eternal torment and misery. It is no light punishment that they are suffering. Satan is, however, aware that still worse punishment may be inflicted on them. Yet he does not regret his revolt. And though he has lost part of his angelic brightness, his mind remains unchanged. He still defies the autocracy of God. In this contest, a great number of angels followed him. They chose him as their leader, for they also wanted to oppose the tyranny of God. They opposed God's power with their equal power and in the battle that followed, they were able to shake the foundation of His throne. The result of the battle is still undecided. Satan intends to renew his contest soon.

In Satan's speeches, is God pictured as an absolute and arbitrary sovereign. Milton's sympathies seem to be divided between God and Satan in the first two books. The speeches he puts in the mouth of Satan, are the speeches of one, groaning under tyranny, and at last rising to break the chains Satan seems to have genuine grievance against God. The Son of God was created later; yet he was promoted over Satan's head. It is on this issue that he raised the rebellion.

(5) **What though...... from me.** (*Lines 105-111*) (*Imp.*).

These lines are extracted from the first speech of Satan in Milton's great epic poem : *Paradise Lost*, Book I. After awaking from the stupor, Satan finds Beelzebub rolling in the lake fire by his side. Satan, first pays a tribute to Beelzebub's fidelity, but soon he repeats his determination to continue his opposition to God.

Satan says that inspite of his defeat in the battle, God has not achieved complete victory over him. He still retains with him his fixed mind. Since his will remains unconquered, Satan questions whether the battle has been conclusive at all. The battle has not been able to crush his spirit and weaken his resolve to pursue his eternal revenge upon and hatred of God. He asks if he can be said to have been overcome when he has such a spirit of revenge, such undying hate and such indomitable courage. God can claim a complete victory only if he crushes Satan's indomitable spirit, which is not possible. Satan means to say that as long as his identity remains unchanged, God's power and wrath cannot certainly rob him of his glory.

These lines are significant as they form the finest part of Satan's speeches. Satan's asserts the superiority of mind to physical suffering. He tries to prove that his defeat is a sort of victory, because it has strengthened his courage and firm will. Satan's unyielding courage and unconquerable spirit have deserved him universal praise, but since these attributes are directed to the pursuit of revenge and endless hatred, they cannot be regarded as noble. Some critics find an autobiographical note in these words of Satan. The Puritans were defeated at the hands of the Royalists at the Restoration. Consequently, Milton, like his creation Satan, might have felt that the Puritans were not still fully subdued, and therefore, he must have consoled himself that way. But Milton certainly did not intend to glorify Satan.

(6) Fallen Cherub.........resist. (*Lines 157-162*) (*Imp.*).

These lines are extracted from Satan's speech in Milton's great epic poem *Paradise Lost*, Book I. Satan maintains that his will remains unconquered so that he is able to pursue his revenge upon God. But Beelzebub who seems to be more of a realist, argues that God may have left their will and strength unimpaired not for nothing, but that may go through the severest penalty that God might further inflict upon them.

Satan being the leader of the fallen angels, is upset by the tone and trend of Beelzebub's speech. He responds quickly so that he might restore faith and courage in Beelzebub. Therefore, addressing Beelzebub as fallen Cherub, he says that weakness, whether in action or in suffering makes one miserable. Satan sets forth his purpose and plan of action against God. He makes it clear to Beelzebub that he is firmly resolved upon doing no good, but finding joy in doing evil. That way he would be acting against the will of God who is their opponent.

It is evident that evil will be Satan's chief weapon against God. By now Satan has realised that open war is out of question. Henceforth, the war between God and Satan will be the war between Good and Evil. It may also be noted here that Milton here highlights the theological ideas of the irreconcilable opposition between Good and Evil. God stands for absolute goodness, while Satan becomes an embodiment of unrelieved Evil.

(7) Him, haply.. .....delays. (*Lines 203-208*).

This Homeric simile appears in Milton's great epic poem *Paradise Lost*, Book I. Satan, as he lay prone on the fiery waves is compaired to various giantic creatures, like Titanian, Briareos, Typhon and Leviathan. Milton compares the huge body of Satan with these gigantic creatures simply to emphasize the vastness of Satan's bulk.

While comparing the huge and massive body of Satan with the 'sea-beast Leviathan', Milton refers to a popular tale told by the sailors about this beastly creature known as the whale. The whale sleeping on the surface of the sea near Norway, was seen, by chance, by the pilot of some ship overtaken by night. The pilot mistook the whale for an island and, unable to proceed to the sea-shore on account of darkness, fixed the anchor of the ship on the scaly skin of the sea-beast and stayed on that side of the whale which was protected from the wind while the sea was engulfed by darkness of night and the much longed-for morning delayed its appearance.

This epic simile was suggested to Milton by his study of the Bible as well as of the books of travels. In the Book of Job, (41, i), Leviathan is the 'crocodile'. The story referred to here rests on the authority of Olaus Magnus whose *History of the Northern Nations* was translated into English in 1658. However, the simile is full of suggestion and contemporary interest as it throws light on the Renaissance spirit of adventure which inspired numerous sailors to undertake voyages.

(8) That with ....poured. (*Lines 214-220*).

These lines have been extracted from Milton's great epic poem *Paradise Lost*, Book I. After being flung down from Heaven, Satan is chained on the lake of fire in Hell. Now, through the will of God, Satan's chains fall off. But for the implied permission of God, Satan would never have risen from the lake of fire.

Milton tells that the reason why God allowed Satan to rise from the lake of fire was that God wanted Satan to carry on his evil designs so that his damnation might be complete. God knew that Satan would not stop resorting to evil deeds. Therefore, God so managed that by repeated acts of sin, Satan, who sought to harm others, might invite great wrath of God on himself. The more he did evil, the greator would be God's wrath that fell on him. In fact Satan wanted to do harm to others (Adam and Eve), but it recoiled on himself. Thus Satan was to see with his enraged eyes that inspite of his doing harm to man, God would show greater favour to man through his infinite grace and kindness. Milton means to say that by doing evil to man, Satan would, in fact, not be harming man, but bringing on himself greater and greater anger of God.

It may be noted here that God promised infinite good to man, as revealed by Archangel Michael to Adam at the end of *Paradise Lost*, Book XII, Michael assures Adam that everlasting happiness will be his if he only proved virtuous and righteous—

> New Heaven, New Earth, ages of endless date
> Found in righteousness and peace and love,
> To bring forth fruits, joy and eternal bliss.

Even Adam realizes the possibility of this bliss when he cries exultantly—

> O goodness infinite ! goodness immense !
> That all this good of evil shall produce,
> Ane evil turn to good !

(9) Farewell.........Hell of Heaven. (*Lines 249-255*) (*Imp.*).

These lines have been extracted from the speech of Satan in Milton's great epic poem *Paradise Lost*, Book I. When Satan finds that there is no escape from Hell, he accepts his lot with full patience and fortitude. He knows that it is for God to decide what is right and what is wrong. Like a practical politician, he admits the superiority of God and attributes to Him arbitrary will and power. In fact, he makes the best of the worst situation.

Satan bids farewell to the blissfull Heaven (though with a heavy heart) and welcomes Hell and all its horrors. He is at least consoled by the thought that he is the sole occupant of Hell, in a way, its ruler, which he always wants to be. He feels that it is the mind that makes the situation happy or reverse. It is the attitude of mind that matters, neither place nor time. The mind is always free from external circumstances. Satan means to say that happiness or misery is not conditioned by circumstances in which one lives, but the state of one's mind. If the mind is so conditioned, it is capable of experiencing heavenly bliss even in Hell, but it can also convert heavenly blessings into hellish miseries.

Satan here expresses the Stoic doctrine according to which, the mind is above pains and sorrows. In fact, it is the moral greatness of an individual that makes him the master of the situation. But these lines should better be studied in the light of the conflict in the mind of Satan. Earlier Satan had lamented over the dismal and woeful conditions of Hell. But now he says that he does not mind that he is in Hell, that he can rise above his surroundings. It is but an attempt to reconcile himself to his present situation.

(10) Here we........ in heaven. (*Lines 261-263*) (*Imp.*).

These lines have been extracted from Satan's speech in Milton's great epic poem *Paradise Lost*, Book I. Satan, who is ambitious, feels satisfied that after all he is the sole occupant of Hell. He knows that there is no escape for him from Hell. Therefore, he accepts his lot with full patience and fortitude. He also feels that mind is always free from the influence of circumstances.

Satan knows that Hell is not so good a place that God will grudge his possession of it. He means that God will not interfere with him in Hell. Therefore, Satan feels quite secure in Hell. Moreover, the greater point of satisfaction for Satan is that here in Hell he would get his ambition of being a ruler fulfilled. Satan is ambitious of reigning as a lord. Since he could not be the ruler of Heaven, he does not want to miss the opportunity of being a ruler of Hell. In his opinion, to reign is worth ambition and it is quite immaterial whether one reigns in Heaven or in Hell.

These lines reveal the keynote of Satan's character, i.e., ambition. He would live in Hell as its ruler than be a slave to God in in Heaven. The sentiments of Satan express considerably Milton's own rebellious spirit and pride. The lines, which have become proverbial, are generally quoted as an example of Milton's love of freedom and independence. Here Milton is seen as a child of Renaissance.

(11) The broad... ...spotty globe. (*Lines 286-291*).

These lines, which have been extracted from Milton's great epic poem, *Paradise Lost*, Book I, are intended to describe the hugeness of Satan's shield. Beelzebub suggests Satan to come forward and address his followers who lie abjectly on the lake of fire so that they would soon regain courage and be full of life again.

In these lines Milton compares the shield of Satan with the huge size of the moon. When Satan moved towards the margin of the lake of fire, the huge disc of his shield which hung on his shoulders, appeared as big as the sphere of the moon which was observed by Galileo, the famous physicist and astronomer of Italy, through his telescope in the evening when he sat on the top of the hill Fesole or in Valdarno in order to discover new lands, or rivers or mountains on the spotted sphere of the moon.

Milton himself got acquainted with the findings of Galileo when he visited him in Florence during his tour of Italy in 1638. Galileo's attempts were a sensational triumph of modern science in Milton's own time, and Milton has made a wonderfully effective and artistic use of it in his epic. In this simile Milton makes a better comparison than made by Homer. Achilles' shield is compared to the moon, but Satan's to the moon as seen through a telescope. Milton does not confine himself within the limits of rigorous comparison. He expands the casual image beyond the dimension which the occasion required. Thus, comparing the shield of Satan to the orb of the Moon, he crowds the imagination with the discovery of the telescope.

(12) Angel Forms........ Chariot-wheels. (*Lines 301-311*).

These lines have been extracted from Milton's great epic poem *Paradise Lost*, Book I. With the help of suitable similes, Milton gives an idea of the vast multitude of the fallen angels, who lay supine and senseless on the sulphurous lake of fire in Hell. Milton compares the fallen angels first to countless fallen leaves secondly to the scattered sea-weed and thirdly to the dead bodies of the soldiers of the Egyptian army.

Milton tells that Satan's fallen companions lay on the lake of fire as thickly as the fallen leaves of autumn trees that lie scattered on the streams in the shady valleys of Vallombrosa where the thick trees with their arched branches form bowers beneath. Secondly, Milton compares these fallen angels to the scattered reeds on the sea when the constellation of stars called Orion accompanied with violent gusts of wind raises a storm in the Red Sea. The thought of the Red Sea also reminds Milton of the overthrow of the Egyptian army. Milton refers to the incident when the Egyptian troops who pursued the Israelites and were drowned in the Red Sea with the result that their bodies, horses and chariots floated on the surface of the sea.

These similes show Milton's scholarship and his deep study of the Bible. He was naturally reminded of the valley of Vallombrosa (meaning a 'shady valley'), for he had passed some of his happiest days of his life here during his visit to Italy. Orion is the southern constellation supposed to resemble a giant with a belt and sword. The ancients believed its rising and its setting to be attended with violent storms.

Busiris was an Egyptian king noted for his inhospitality to strangers. Hercules paid him a visit and slew him. He could not have been the Pharaoh (Egyptian king) whose fate is described in Exodus XIV, adopted by Milton here. It was Meneptah II who persecuted the Israelites, but Memphis was not his capital. Hence this reference shows an inaccuracy. However, the story runs that when the Israelites lived in bondage a Goshan in Egypt, God sent Moses to deliver them from their bondage. After a long time the Pharaoh agreed to let the Israelites go. When these people were crossing the Red Sea which had parted itself to give way to them, the Egyptian army led by Pharaoh treacherously pursued them, but as they entered the Red Sea, it closed the waters of the Sea and drowned the king and all the soldiers. The total overthrow of the Egyptians presents a vivid picture better than which nothing could have suggested the rout of the rebel angels.

(13) As when...... . land of Nile. (*Lines 338-343*).

This epic simile has been taken from Milton's epic *Paradise Lost*, Book I. Milton uses an epic simile to illustrate the vast multitude of the fallen angels in Hell At the rousing call of their leader Satan, the fallen angels were awakened from their stupor as they floated on the lake of fire.

Milton says that when the fallen angels were flying in the air in order to reach the solid ground, they appeared like the swarm of locusts that swept over the land of Egypt at the waiving of Moses's rod. Moses raised the Plague of lucusts to harass the Pharaoh who refused the liberation of the people of Israel. When the Pharaoh would not let the Israelites go, the Lord gave Moses the power to cause severe plagues in Egypt. With this power, Moses raised the thick cloud of locusts over the unholy land of Egypt. The fallen angels are rightly likened to this swarm of locusts, for these angels were no less an afflicting pest to mankind than the locusts were to the Egyptians.

Here the reference is to the eighth plague inflicted upon the Egyptians. In all, ten plagues were caused by Moses. They were : The waters made blood, the frogs, the lice; the flies, the murrain, the boils, the thunder, hail, etc., the locusts, the darkness, and the death of the firstborn.

(14) A multitude.........sands. (*Lines 351-355*).

This simile has been taken from Milton's epic *Paradise Lost*, Book I. Milton uses a series of similes to illustrate the huge multitude of the fallen angels in Hell. When lying on the lake of fire the angels looked like the scattered leaves, sedge and floating carcasses of Egyptian army. At the call of their leader Satan, they uprose on their wings. While flying in the air, they appeared like the thick cloud of locusts that swept over the land of Egypt.

When the fallen angels descended on solid ground in their poised flight, Milton compares them to the barbarian hordes that overran central and southern Europe during the fifth and sixth centuries. These barbarians (the Goths, Vandals and Huns) left the sterile regions of the North and sought the richer and fertile regions of the South. These barbarians passed the Rhine and the Denube in the course of their movement and spread to the south of Gibralter and to the deserts of Libya in north Africa. According to Milton, the fallen angels as they spread over the plains of Hell were more numerous than the barbarian hordes.

In this simile, Milton resorts to human history. The Rhine and the Danube formed the boundaries of the Roman empire. The Goths, a Germanic tribe invaded both Western and Eastern Roman Empires. The Huns were the Asiatic barbarians who under the command of Atilla overran a great part of Europe in the 5th Century A.D. The Vandals, also a Germanic tribe, invaded Gaul (modern France, Belgium, Holland, Switzerland and Germany), Spain and North Africa and finally attacked Rome.

(15) Nor content...... type of Hell. (*Lines 399-405*)

These lines have been extracted from Milton's epic *Paradise Lost*, Book I. Milton refers to the various names by which the fallen angels came to be known and worshipped in the heathen world. He first names Moloch who was pleased with the sacrifice of children and was worshipped in the countries in the east and south of Palestine.

Milton tells that Moloch was not satisfied with his worship only by the people of Amman. So he extended his influence to Israel which was the place of true God's worship. He enticed Solomon, the wisest King of Israel, through his heathen wives, to build a temple for him on the Mount of Olives, just in front of the temple of Jehovah at Jerusalem. On account of the unholy worship of Moloch, the Mount of Olives subsequently came to be known as 'opprobrious hill'. Moloch made the beautiful valley of Hinnom his bower. Here the bones of sacrificed children were strewn and therefore the place symbolised Hell.

The word 'Tophet' is derived from the Hebrew word 'Topheth', meaning 'a place to spit on'. Milton refers to a spot situated on the south-eastern part of Gehenna or the Valley of Hinnom. Here the children of Israel were burnt as offerings to Moloch and their bones were strewn there. Later the refuse of the city was deposited there. Still later it was identified with the place of torment, hence the type of Hell.

(16) For spirits.........fulfil. (*Lines 423-431*) (*Imp.*)

These lines have been extracted from Milton's great epic poem *Paradise Lost*, Book I. Milton refers to the various names by which the fallen angels came to be known and worshipped in the heathen world. Milton tells that these devils also disguised themselves as heathen gods and goddesses, known by the names of Baalim and Astaroth, male and female respectively.

These devils could assume any sex they liked, for they were made of heavenly matter, i.e., either, which was unmixed with any gross material substance like flesh and bones. They might become male or female or even both at once whenever they so wished. Their substance made their bodies as supple as to have no hindrance from joint or limb. Therefore, bodies did not need the support of the fragile bones which are so needed to support the body of unwieldy human flesh. These angels, therefore, could assume any shape they liked, they could contract or expand, they could put on any colour, become bright or dark, and they possessed the power to do what they intended. Milton means to say that the angels did good deeds for their friends and harmed them when they were unfriendly.

(17) Thammuz .....wounded. (*Lines 446-452*).

These lines have been taken from the catalogue of the names of devils in Milton's *Paradise Lost*, Book I. Milton describes these various devils as they were known and worshipped in the heathen countries. With several devils came Astarte, the moon-goddess of Phoenicia to whom the Phoenician maidens paid their vows and sang songs. Astarte was also worshipped in Sion where her temple was built on the Mount of Olives by Solomon.

Here Milton Tells that Thammuz came next to Astarte. Thammuz was a Pheonician God, beloved of Astrate. He was believed to have been killed by a wild boar while hunting in the forests of Lebanon. Since then it was believed that he came back to life, and died every year. The water of the river Adonis was supposed to turn red in colour, perhaps due to the blood of wounded Thammuz flowing in it. Thammuz was yearly worshipped on a certain day in summer by the Phoenician maidens who sang love songs and lamented throughout the day which was called 'a day of weeping'.

Thammuz was a Syrian god who was originally a Babylonian god of fertility. It was from Babylonia that his worship was introduced into Phoenicia. The Babylonian myth represented Thammuz as a youthful shepherd, loved by Ishtar and killed by a wild boar. In Phoenicia he was named as Adoni and the Greeks called him Adonis. "His death and revival were widely celebrated in the East under the name of his Syrian equivalent, Thammuz." (Sir Paul Harvey)

(18) A leper...... ..vanquished. (*Lines 471-476*).

These lines have been extracted from Milton's epic *Paradise Lost*, Book I. Milton describes the various devils as they were known and worshipped in the heathen countries. After describing Moloch, Chemos, Bealim, Astareth, Thammuz and Dagon, Milton tells that Rimmon came after Dagon, the fish-god. Rimmon was worshipped in Syria, and had a pleasant temple built to him in Damascus. He was also bold enough to have his temple built in front of the temple of the true God.

Here Milton alludes to a Syrian leper, Naaman, a captain of the host of Syria, who stopped his allegiance to Rimmon. On the advice of a Jewish slave girl, Naaman met the prophet Elisha who advised him to wash himself seven times in the river Jordon in Palestine to cure himself of leprosy. When so cured, he decided to worship Jahovah instead of Rimmon. But Rimmon got a king as his worshipper. He was Ahaz, the king of Jordon, who gave himself upto idolatories and started heathen worship there in Syria, where he had gone to meet Tiglath-Pileser, the Assyrian king who had attacked Syria. With the help of the Assyrian King, Ahaz defeated Syria and captured Damascus. He saw an altar there in one of the temples, admit so attracted him that he built a like altar in the temple of Jerusalem. Henceforth, he became a worshipper of Rimmon. Thus Ahaz disparaged God's altar by replacing it by Rimmon's altar. He made unholy offerings and worshipped the gods whose country he had conquered.

The above reference is to the book of *Kings* in the Bible. According to 2 *Kings*, Chapter 16, Ahaz, son of Jotham, King of Judah, begain to reign at the age of twenty and reigned for sixteen years. He did not reign as nobly as his father. He "made his son to pass through the fire, according to the abominations of the heathen" and "sacrificed and burnt incense in the high places, and on the hills, and under every green tree". Ahaz took the silver and gold that was found in the treasures of the king and the temple of God and sent it for a pr sent to the king of Assyria who won Damascus for him. When Ahaz went there he saw an altar which highly attracted him. He ordered Vrijah, the priest of the temple of God at Jerusalem, to build an altar on the pattern of the altar at Damascus on which he burnt his unholy offerings.

(19) As when... .... monarchs. (*Lines 595-599*).

This epic simile occurs in Milton's epic, *Paradise Lost*, Book I. After describing the appearance of the force of the vast contingent of angels before Satan, Milton attempts to give an idea of the obscured brightness of Satan's personality. Among his companions, Satan stood like a tower. He had not yet lost his native brightness, though it was a bit impaired on account of his overthrow from Heaven to Hell.

Milton conveys the idea of the dimmed glory of Satan with the help of two similes. First he compares it with the newly-rising sun, the bright rays of which are obscured by the misty eastern horizon. Secondly, he compares Satan's brightness with the sun as it is seen during a solar eclipse when the light of the sun is intercepted by the moon coming in between the sun and the earth and half the globe is covered with unlucky twilight. The nations coming under its influence are filled with superstitions fear of some great calamity, or some downfall of a monarch.

The comparsion between Satan's loss of angelic brightness and the sun is apt. But the legitimate limit of the comparison is exceeded when Milton refers to the eclipse of the sun as portending disaster to monarchs. In fact, on account of such observations, *Paradise Lost*, had to be submitted to the licenser for religious literature, the Archbishop of Canterbury, who asked one of his chaplains, Tomkyns to go through it. Mark Pattison says that Tomkyns felt afraid of the phrase 'with fear of change Perplexes monarchs,' lest it should offend the king, "but at last he let the book pass". In Shakespeare's *King Lear*, Gloucester also refers to this popular superstition ; "These late eclipses in the sun and moon portend no good to us ; love cools, friendship falls off, brothers divide : in cities mutinies ; in countries discord ; in palaces treason". (Act I, Sc. 2).

(20) Darkened so.........revenge. (*Lines 599-604*).

These lines which have been extracted from Milton's epic *Paradise Lost*, Book I, give a realistic description of Satan's personality. Even after his overthrow, Satan had not yet lost his original brightness, though it was dimmed, like the sun's glory in a misty morning or in an eclipse.

Milton tells that Satan still retained his original brightness, though dimmed. But inspite of his obscured glory, Satan shone brighter than his companions, for he was an archangel. However, his face showed marks of scars made by lightening, the dreadful weapon used by God. These scars also gave a clear indication of the cares and anxiety which afflicted his mind. But Milton further tells that though his face bore marks of anxieties, his brow gave indications of his undaunted courage and thoughtful pride which was waiting only for a suitable opportunity to take revenge.

Here again, Satan's martial qualities are emphasized. He is a person of unyielding courage and thoughts of revenge. The loss of Heaven and consequent tortures of Hell make no disheartening impact on his spirit. Therefore, in his eyes can be seen a hope and it is his this quality that enables him to lead his followers to yet another struggle with God.

(21) But he.........our fall. (*Lines 637-642*).

These lines have been extracted from Milton's epic *Paradise Lost*, Book I, calling his companions as 'matchless powers', Satan tries to convince them that their struggle was not inglorious, though its consequence was disastrous. But till then they did not know about the real power of the weapons of God. He finally tells his followers that they certainly cannot blame him for the defeat, for he had neither acted against their will, nor avoided any personal danger.

Satan tells his followers that it was their ignorance of the real strength of God, which they could know only when they challenged his power, that led to their defeat. He argues that God was the supreme, but He ruled only by convention. He means to say that the ruler of Heaven until they fought against him did not anticipate any danger. All this time, old reputation, consent of tbe angels and prevailing custom, enabled him to exercise his supreme power not challenged until then. Moreover, the angels did not have any idea of the real strength of God. They were, therefore, tempted to challenge His power. Thus Satan attributes his defeat to God's 'strength concealed', i.e., thunder.

Here Satan is seen a true politician who is able to find a good excuse for his defeat. He convinces his followers that their defeat had been due to the hidden strength of God. This is a sufficient consolation for the fallen angels because they considered Satan the champion of liberty.

(22) Henceforth.........his foe. (*Lines 643-649*) (*Imp.*)

These lines have been extracted from Milton's great epic *Paradise Lost*, Book I. Satan convinces his followers that it was not he, but the concealed strength of God that was responsible for their rout. So far he is concerned, he never gave them wrong advice, nor did he avoid any personal danger. In fact, till the time of their defeat, they did not have any idea of the real strength of God.

Satan convinces his followers that they are now in a better position to face God. They can now fight, against God and with greater advantage, for they now know how powerful God is and they know also their own relative strength. Therefore, it would be unwise on their part to challenge such a powerful adversary as God to an open war. But if a war is forced upon them, they would not fear it, but fight it bravely. Therefore, the better course of action open to them is to work secretly and plan treacherously. Satan means to say that what they could not achieve by strength, they are going to achieve by craft. In this way, they would make God realize that force is not the only factor in achieving victories. God will know that the victor who succeeded with the help of sheer force, achieved only partial victory over his enemy. Satan implies that the greatest victors are those who win the hearts of those whom they have conquered.

Here Satan is seen arguing quite plausibly. It is true that the real victory is of the heart and not of the body. But Satan's belief that he can defeat God by his cunningness and fraud is a mere fallacy, for how can he hope to achieve a complete victory over God by his duplicity ?

(23) By him... .... better hid. (*Lines 684-688*).

These lines which have been extracted from Milton's great epic *Paradise Lost*, Book I, reveal the role of Mammon, the god of wealth in spreading the lust for gold among mankind. According to Milton, Mammon was the basest of the angels that fell from Heaven. He was the least erect, for he always stooped to look at the golden pavements in Heaven.

Here Milton gives his own explanation of men's love of wealth. It was Mammon who first lured men with love of gold. It was he who induced them to commit the unfilial crime of tearing open the womb of their mother earth and to dig out gold which has been the chief cause of men's perennial miseries. Milton means to say that men would have been happy, had gold remained undiscovered.

Here Milton's puritanism is apparent. He discards wealth as a source of evils and vices. When he says that Mammon disclosed the secret of the bowels of the earth to men, he is perhaps alluding to the common superstition among miners that the demons, known as *gnomes* are the guardians of mines.

(24) Let none ....perform. (*Lines 690-699*) (*Imp.*)

These lines which have been extracted from Milton's great epic *Paradise Lost*, Book I, show the poet's dislike for gold and riches. Milton tells that it was Mammon who first lured men with love of gold. It would have been better had gold remained undiscovered, for it is the source of evils in the world.

Milton advises people not to admire gold, for it is the product of Hell. It is a precious metal, but a curse to mankind. It generates innumerable evils. However, Milton being a lover of arts and beauty, admires the skill and speed with which the Devils constructed the Pandemonium. He says that men are very proud of their magnificent buildings constructed by them. With a great sense of wonder and pride they describe the temple of Belus and the hanging gardens of Babylon and also the works of Egyptian Pharoahs who made pyramids which are one of the seven wonders of the world. But those who boast of these human achievements should know that the magnificent building constructed by the devils far surpassed all human achievements. They accomplished the task in no time, for which innumerable human beings must have laboured hard for as long as an age, and even in that time they could have hardly finished it.

Here Milton refers to two greatest human achievements. The most famous works of Babylon, the capital of Babylonia (situated on the Euphrates) were the temple of Balus, the supreme Deity, the Royal Palace and the Hanging Gardens. The Pharoahs of Egypt constructed huge pyramids about which it is said that 3,66,006 men were employed for twenty years for building the Great Pyramid. These Pyramids were constructed over the tombs of kings and date back to 2800-1700 B.C.

(25) Nor was.........Erring. (*Lines 738-747*)

These lines have been extracted from Milton's great epic *Paradise Lost*, Book I. Milton states that when Pandemonium was built in Hell, the crowd of fallen angels were wonder-stricken by its beauty and workmanship. They were all praise for its designer.

Vulcan, or Mulciber whose architectural skill was well-known in Heaven where he had built many towered palaces for Angel-kings.

Here Milton gives the Greek version of the fall of Mulciber, which he feels to be an incorrect version. He was known as Hephaestus in ancient Greece where he was worshipped. In Italy he was known as Mulciber or Vulcan. According to the Greek myth, Mulciber was thrown by angry Jove (Zeus) straight from the crystal parapets of Heaven. It is also said that he fell the whole day, from morning to noon and from noon to dewy evening on a summer day. At the sunset, streaming like a comet, he dropped from the great height on Lemnos, a volcanic island in the Aegean Sea. But Milton asserts that this myth is wrong, for Mulciber, according to him had been earlier thrown from Heaven alongwith the rebel angels long before Earth was created.

Hephaestus was known in Greece as the god of fire and metal-working who forged thunderbolts for Jove. In Italy (Ausonian land) he was known as Mulciber. Italy was known as Ausonia in ancient times, so named after Auson, son of Ulysses, from whom its people are supposed to be descended. According to the Greek myth, Hephaestus, the son of Zeus and Hera took the side of his mother Hera in a quarrel between Zeus and Hera. Out of anger, Zeus caught him by the leg and hurled him down from Mount Olympus which was the heaven of the Greek gods. Milton's account of the fall seems to be based on a passage in Homer's *Iliad*, in which Hephaestus tells Hera, mother how he was hurled from Olympus by angry Zeus : "He (Zeus) caught me by the foot and threw me from the sacred threshold. All day I was carried along and with the setting sun I fell on Lemnos : and there was little wind left in me, I can tell you".

(26) As bees ......state-affairs. (*Lines 768-775*) (*Imp*).

This epic simile, which occurs in Milton's great epic *Paradise Lost*, Book I is used by Milton to compare the vast multitude of the fallen angels to a swarm of innumerable bees gathered on a bee-hive, when Pandemonium was built, the fallen angels were ordered to assemble in it. Soon the whole space was thronged for the multitude of the angels was the hugest ever imaginable.

Here Milton compares the huge multitude of fallen angels to the throng of the innumerable bees in summer when the sun passes through Taurus or Bull, the second of the Zodiacal constellations. At this time the bees swarm together around their hive. Some of the bees fly to and fro among flowers, fresh with dew to gather honey. Some settle upon the smooth flat piece of timber on which the hive rests to consider their public affairs. The hive, built from straw resembles a fortified town and the plank greased with fresh wax, on which the bees meet and converse, has the appearance of the suburb of a fortified town.

The simile of the bees is quite apt, for it has close points of resemblance between the bees and fallen angels. The angels are as numerous as bees. The angels 'hiss of rustling wings' is very much like the hissing sound created by flying bees. Their assembly in Pandemonium is likened to assembly of bees on the smoothed plank. However, the simile of the bees is of great antiquity. First it appears in Homer and then in Virgil. But Milton's simile is more vivid and suggestive. In this regard the views of Falconer may be noted here : "Milton has finely imitated Homer's simile, and improved it with the addition of the last three lines, 'Or on the smoothed plank', etc., which gives the greater closeness to his simile".

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QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Q. 1. Discuss the theme and moral purpose ***of Paradise Lost.***

Or

How far, in your opinion, has Milton been able to justify the ways of God to Man ?

Ans. According to Milton, the poet's function is "to imbreed and cherish in a great people the seeds of virtue and public civility, to allay the perturbations of the mind and set the affections in right tune." Therefore, he could not think of separating poetry from his zeal for reformation. It was this moral ardour in him that inspired him to give his people something 'doctrinal and exemplory.' For this he chose the Fall of Man as the theme of his great epic *Paradise Lost*—the express purpose being "to justify the ways of God to men". Milton, the Puritan, wanted "to show the reasonableness of religion, and the necessity of obedience to the Divine Law". (Dr. Johnson).

Various critics like Walter Raleigh, Joseph Addison and Coleridge took Milton at his word. Walter Raleigh said : "It (*Paradise Lost*) concerns itself with the fortunes not of a city or of an empire but of the whole human race, and with that particular event in the history of the race which has moulded all its destinies". Addison also finds the great moral justified in the poem and says that "obedience to the will of God makes men happy, and that disobedience makes them miserable." Coleridge finds universality in the theme of *Paradise Lost* and agrees with Milton that the poem "represents the origin of evil, and the combat of evil and good: it contains matter of deep interest to all mankind, as forming the basis of all religion, and the true occasion of all philosophy whatsoever". Dr. Johnson also states that Milton's subject is "the fate of worlds, the revolutions of heaven and of earth; rebellion against the Supreme King, raised by the highest order of created beings; the overthrow of their host, and the punishment of their crime; the creation of a new race of reasonable creatures; their original happiness and innocence, their forfeiture of immortality, and their restoration to hope and peace".

But the modern critics are not satisfied with the surface interpretation of the theme of the poem. They go beyond the explicit meaning. E. M. W. Tillyard is of the view that "such simplemindedness can ill satisfy a generation which is sceptical of professed motives and which suspects the presence of others, either concealed or not realised by the author". Therefore, the modern critics have shown several doubts about the conscious meaning and stressed the unconscious meaning of the poem.

Critics like E. M. W. Tillyard, Greenlaw and Denis Saurat have found symbolic meaning in the poem. According to Denis Saurat, "The study of the fall teaches us that man is a double being in whom co-exist intelligence of passion and reason. The two powers ought to be in harmonious equilibrium, desire being normally expressed, but remaining under the leadership of reason. Evil appears, the Fall takes place, when passion triumphs over reason. Passion triumphant over reason—such is the source of all evil, moral evil, physical evil (the consequence of moral evil) and political evil". Likwise, Greenlaw says that "The theme of *Paradise Lost* is less of obedience to God than of obedience to temperance, to the rational against the irrational part of human nature. There are conflicts ; one between Satan and the two intemperate vices, ambition and lust for power ; the Fall then will be the yielding of reason to passion, and in particular to passion of sensuality". Tillyard also stresses this point : "Once passions have got the upper hand, chaos, ensues, all peace of mind is gone, man has fallen from true liberty to mental anarchy".

Thus Milton's conscious purpose is evident. Eve's fall is caused by the triumph of passion over reason. Eve is seduced on account of the 'triviality of mind'. Her sin is "a dreadful unawareness, despite all warnings, of the enormous issues involved". When Eve has committed the sin, Adam follows her in the act on account of links of flesh. Their initial sin generates other evils—anger, hatred, sensuality, greed, etc. Thus the story of the fall of Adam and Eve is the story of the fall of Reason. This conscious purpose has been summarized by Tillyard thus : "Man was created of matter ; pure, noble, but curiously fallible, having freedom of will. His mental levity and gregariousness expose him to the assault of passion, which, while it sways reason robs him of liberty and subjects him to slavery both within and without, but by the operation of Christ he may establish reason once again in his mind and reach a higher state than that from which he fell."

So far the justification of the ways of God to men is concerned, opinions differ. Those who agree with Milton's professed aim argue that Milton has justified God's ways through the principle of Free Will. In fact, obedience has no meaning without Free Will. God created human beings, and all Ethereal Powers 'just and right.' He also gave them conscience to judge and distinguish for themselves right from wrong, and good from evil. Good and evil exist together in the universe. It is for man, under the dictates of his conscience, to shun evil and follow the path of good. Within these limits and under these conditions man is free to stand by God and act according to divine principles or go against them. Raphael also tells Adam in Book VIII.

> "to stand or fall
> Free in thine own arbitrement lies."

Conscience, Will and Reason have been given to man to choose his own path of action. Therefore, man cannot blame any external power for his actions or for his sufferings in consequence of his own actions. If God had not made human beings and Ethereal Powers free to act according to their conscience, how could he distinguish between the true and false, the constant and the inconstant ? Adam was free to reject the temptation, but he surrendered before it and wrought his fall, in spite of Raphael's advice and warning—

> "………take heed lest passion sway.
> Thy judgment to do aught, which else free will
> Would not admit ; thine and of all thy sons,
> The weal or woe in thee is placed ; beware !"

God is not unjust in punishing Man, for he was not condemned to eternal damnation. If Satan stands for Passion, Christ stands for Reason. In other words, Sin is not eternal damnation. There is always a hope of Redemption. The operation of Christ, the Son of God, establishes reason in the mind of Man and thus he reaches a higher state than from which he fell.

Some critics find an inconscious purpose in the poem that unconsciously Milton sided with Satan. They say that "Devoutly, but mechanically, Milton paid lipservice to the duty of obedience, but in his heart he was chanting a hymn to freedom and rebellion." For this, it is said, Milton has made Satan his 'spokesman'. All the noble sentiments in book I, expressed by Satan are Milton's own. Blake, therefore, included Milton in the Devil's party. But such interpretation does not stand as soon as we find that Milton has presented Satan as an object and fallen angels subjected to eternal damnation on account of his preference for absolute evil.

Q. 2. Write a note on the elements of the Renaissance and the Reformation in the poetry of Milton, with particular reference to *Paradise Lost*, Book I.

Or

"Milton's poetry is the meeting ground of the Renaissance and the Reformation." Elucidate this statement with reference to *Paradise Lost*, Book I.

Or

Show how the Hebraic and Hellenic forces blend harmoniously in Milton's *Paradise Lost*, Book I.

Ans. Milton's poetry presents a happy blending of the two elements, the Renaissance and the Reformation. In fact, in his mental make-up, these two elements are traceable in the form of his religious and moral ardour and his broad and enlightened outlook. On the one hand, he had a deeply religious temperament and was a profound student of the *Bible* and the scriptures, on the other, he drank deep of classical poetry and philosophy and inherited all the culture and humanism of the Renaissance.

The Renaissance meant, as we understand, the revival of the study of the classics, starting with the fall of Constantinople in 1453 and the consequent dispersal of the Greek scholars and philosophers throughout Europe. The Renaissance was characterized by a renewed interest in the writings of the ancient Greek and Roman authors and scholars. The scholars of the Renaissance infused into English all that was characteristic of the Greek and Roman literature. Consequently, they adored beauty, romance and plastic arts. Love of beauty, art and music became the chief pre-occupations of the Renaissance writers. In fact, the movement was a breakaway from the medieval spirit—the narrow outlook, the monastic and church discipline, the inhibition of passion and imagination and the other worldly outlook. The new movement revolutionized man's attitude towards himself. By long tradition man had been considered a born sinner whose only salvation lay in self-immolation. But with the advent of the changed outlook, a deep interest in man and his activities was revived. Thie attitude came to be called 'Humanism'.

As against the Renaissance, the Reformation was a religious movement which aimed at the cultivation of moral, religious and spritual values. The Reformation of Hebraism stands for spiritual discipline, moral austerity and other worldly outlook. The writers who came under the influence of this movement shunned all kinds of pleasures and frivolities and artistic pursuits. They were moralists, preachers and reformers. They were known as Puritans who denounced the unscriptural excesses of the Roman Catholic church on the one hand, and the unrestrained popular indulgence in pleasure on the other. They were absolutely out of tune with pro-catholic trend of the court and with its encouragement of passionate pastimes like horse-racing, bear-baiting, cock-fighting, and even theatrical performances.

Born and brought up in a devoutly religious family, Milton had inherited all that characterized the Reformation. He was educated at St. John's college, Cambridge, when William Perkins, the great English Calvinist preacher was at the height of his influence in that university. Milton was greatly influenced by that body of Calvinist doctrines to which Calvin had supplied the emotional as well as the intellectual ingredient.

It was the Puritan in Milton that made him select the Fall of Man as the theme for his great epic, because in the treatment of the Fall he meant to condemn the mental levity of Man, who is prone to forget the importance of his own actions. Adam and Eve casually commit what they imagine is a trifling error, and for which they are punished with a doom out of all proportion to their crime :

> "Of man's first disobedience, and the fruit
> Of that forbidden Tree whose mortal taste
> Brought death into the world, and all our woe
> With loss of Eden..... "

Milton's *Paradise Lost* is the poetical offering on the altar of God. Milton believed that a poet is an inspired mouthpiece of God who had blessed him with 'that one talent' with which he is to 'serve my Maker'. In 1642, he wrote :

"Poetical powers are the inspired gift of God rarely bestowed . . . . and are of power beside the office of a pulpit, to public civility, to allay the perturbations of mind and set the affections in right tune ; to celebrate in glorious and lofty hymns, the throne and equipage of God's almightiness . . . . to sing victorious agonies of martyres and saints, the deeds and triumphs of just and pious nations . . . ."

With this aim in view, Milton conceived the aim of his *Paradise Lost*. In the beginning of the great poem, he prays to 'that eternal spirit who can enrich with all utterance and knowledge' ;

"What in me is dark,
Illumine, what is low raise and support ;
That to the highth of great argument
I may assert Eternal Providence,
And justify the ways of God to men".

It is evident that in *Paradise Lost* Milton upholds and justifies the Divine Order infallibly prevailing in the Universe. Milton holds that God is the supreme commander of the universe, under whose benevolent command there is a perfectly ordered universe with all its parts not only interconnected but properly balanced. Tillyard says : "Milton's belief in this traditional world-picture was emotionally the most powerful theological element in his poetry, and it finds expression without least sign of conflict. We know of Milton's love of the *Palms* and the *Book of Job* ; and we may conjecture that he loved them largely because of the many passages that describe the glories of creation and glory of their Creator in them. The liveliness of the universe, the bounty of its phenomena, and the beautiful order in which God disposed them were matters of perpetually passionate belief throughout Milton's life."

Milton's deepest faith in God is also revealed in the following lines :

Henceforth I learn, that to obey is best,
And love with fear the only God, to walk
As in his presence, ever to observe,
His providence, and on him sole depend,
Merciful over all his works, with good
still overcoming evil, and by small.
Accomplishing great things, by things deem'd weak
Subverting worldly strong, and worldly wise
By simply meek."

Thus, it is evident that the Reformatory or Puritanical thought is the very basis of the plan and purpose of *Paradise Lost*. The poem is essentially the work of a Puritan. It is a beautiful poetical rendering of the basic precepts and tenets of all the Christian scriptures. It is the *Bible* poetized by one of the greatest poets of the world.

But *Paradise Lost* would have lost all its charm, had it been deprived of all that characterized the Renaissance *Paradise Lost* is the product of Renaissance leaving Renaissance art and literature. Milton's cosmology is based on Ptolemiac theory which was the most important Renaissance theory of cosmology. In fact, Milton's Renaissance love of learning is evident in his other works also, such as, *L'Allegro* and *Il Penseroso*. *L'Allegro* is characterized by echoes of romance, chivalry, pastoral music and dance, which are all essentially Renaissance in character. In *Il Penseroso*, the poet dwells upon his love of Pagan learning. Lycidas is a pastoral elegy in the tradition of Virgil, Bion and Moschus. *Samson Agonistes* is classical in theme and treatment.

A very important aspect of the Renaissance was Humanism. It asserted the essential dignity of man as man. Man had come to be regarded as the crown and roof of all creation, the measure of all things. The goal of life could be achieved not by the study of God but of man. It, therefore, turned to the scriptures for the best records of man's nature in relation to God, of righteousness and love and then to the classical literature, where it found a wider revelation of man as an individual and a citizen.

Milton was a staunch individualist and a champion of individual liberty and freedom. According to the Renaissance philosophy a life in which man is not responsible for his actions is meaningless. He shows that God in his omniscience has foreknowledge of man's fate but He leaves man's will free. This is exemplified not only in Adam, but also in Satan whose imbending resolution is here exhibited in its most magnificent and ideal form. Self-exaltation is the motive of all Satan's conduct. Even in his misery and defeat he retains his individual worth and dignity. He continues to possess invincible courage and will power even in his worst state of fall and suffering. He says to his fallen compeers :

"Fallen cherub, to be weak is miserable,
Doing or suffering... .."

He gives expression to his invincibility :

What though the field be lost ?
All is not lost ; the unconquerable will,
And study of revenge, immortal hate,
And courage never to submit or yield,
And what is else not to be overcome ?

To the Renaissance man, independence was the one ambition and goal of life. Satan becomes the spokesman of this Renaissance philosophy :

A mind not to be changed by place or time,
The mind is its own place, and in itself,
Can make a Heaven of Hell, a Hell of Heaven,
....
Here we may reign secure ; and in my choice,

To reign is worth ambition, though in Hell ;
Better to reign in Hell than serve in Heaven.

This is true Renaissance spirit that Milton so strongly expresses through Satan. The Renaissance man had an insatiable thirst for knowledge for adventure and explorations. It is this thirst that impels Satan, against all dangers and risks, to break away from the Hell and explore the immeasurable chaos and the newly-created human world.

Thus Milton brought about a fusion and synthesis of the two great movements of his age—the Renaissance and the Reformation. "Milton's true kinship is not with Bunyan or Baxter—the strictly Puritan writers—not yet altogether with Cromwell and the heroes of the battle for religious and political liberty, but with ancient classical poets, and his immediate Elizabethan predecessors—Shakespeare, Spenser whose spiritual aspirations were united with the human passion for truth and beauty, and who trusted the imagination as an important medium for the attainment of their ideal. Milton had nothing in him of the morbid scrupulosity which is such an inhuman feature in the Puritan sect. His was a large nature which demanded a free expansion of life. That is why he is a nearer kin to Shakespeare than to Pope. Like the great Elizabethan writers, he succeeded in combining a passionate love of beauty with religious fervour and a strenuous moral idealism, and he was the last poet in England to achieve this, as after him the gulf between the movements became too wide to be bridged again. His *Paradise Lost* though written with the express purpose of 'justifying the ways of God to man' is the great surviving monument of the immense mass of Renaissance writing dealing wiih Biblical material."

Q. 3. Show how Satan is an embodiment of Renaissance spirit of challenge, inquiry, and adventure. [*Agra University*.]

Ans. *In Paradise Lost*, Milton sets out to justify the ways of God to men. It is an objective which, some agree, has been achieved by Milton, particularly when *Paradise Regained* is completed. Read as a theological thesis, *Paradise Lost* may support the view. If *Paradise Lost* is considered as an artistic product, it gives a different impression. Satan will certainly appear as the hero of the epic however divergent may be the view about it. Satan has the reader's sympathy and has even Milton's sympathy, even if Milton does not know it.

It may be that unconsciously Milton projects much of himself upon Satan. The Renaissance spirit in Milton in its fading glow, lights up the mind of Satan. The revolt of the angels in heaven begins with Satan's challenge to the autocracy of God. Milton makes Satan a Republican like himself. If it were not shocking impiety to some Christians, God might be put in the place of Charles and then Milton would be Satan.

The love of personal freedom characterizes both Satan and Milton. We may say that this love of liberty springs from a keen consciousness of individuality which the Renaissance had developed. The Renaissance meant again a broadening of the horizon of the mind—it was, in fact, a quest for knowledge. The human mind seemed to have recognised no limit to passion and search for knowledge, to longing and aspiration ; and it was a spirit that dared and staked all (and such a spirit is reflected in Marlowe's *Dr. Faustus*).

The all-daring spirit of adventure is in Satan. It draws from his supreme intellectual powers, not from his physical strength and prowess. Satan is, it should not be forgotten, pre-eminently an intellectual figure. He will match God by his intellect, if not by physical powers. If he is going to wage endless war with God, he will put his intellect against God's superior advantage in sheer brute force, for he attributes God's success to his thunderbolt. He has been subjected to direct physical suffering, but he finally triumphs over it. He rallies his followers with words (which display again the intellectual pre-eminence), banishing despair and weariness of spirit. His own spirit remains unconquerable and he infuses the same spirit in his followers :

> The mind in its own place, and in itself,
> Can make a Heaven of Hell, a Hell of Heaven.

The mind that can defy all circumstances and perils, reflects the new spirit of the Renaissance.

The rumour of a new world to be created where a new race is to be placed to supplant the fallen angels, sets Satan's mind working. There is much of Renaissance curiosity—the quest for the new and strange—in it as of the daring spirit, generated by the Renaissance. Against the background of Renaissance culture, a character like Satan could have been conceived and executed.

Q. 4. "Devoutly, but mechanically, Milton paid lipservice to the duty of obebience, but in his heart he was chanting a hymn to freedom and rebellion." Explain and illustrate.

Ans. Milton's object in *Paradise Lost* is to justify the ways of God to man. And he begins with the expulsion of Satan and the rebel-angels from Heaven. He does seem to condemn Satan and his followers for their act of rebellion. But the way in which Satan is presented to us by Milton contradicts his own purpose, *viz.*, justifying the ways of God to man. It is true that man is tempted by Satan, as a result of which he is cast out of Paradise. Then Jesus Christ comes into the world to redeem man. It is the old Bible story. Milton makes it the basis of the epic.

But we find in *Paradise Lost Book I* that all interest is concentrated on Satan. He is made a heroic figure. and he enforces our admiration. The depth of hell is revealed to us. It is a place of unimaginable torment for Satan and his followers. Yet Satan soon rallies his followers who have been in a stupor, and inspires them with his own hope and courage. Satan rises above his own suffering and makes his followers forget their own too. Satan might have lost part of his angelic lustre, but he lost none of his valour and strength of will. He is after all going to wage incessant war with God, if not by force, yet by craft. He has been made wiser by experience. No weakness ever invades him. He is ever going to carry on his resistance to God.

What emerges from this picture is that Satan challenged the autocracy of God. In spite of himself, Milton's sympathy is with Satan. The poet himself fought for the same cause as Satan—the poet was up against the autocracy of Charles I as Satan was up against the autocracy of God. Unconsciously, the poet portrays himself in Satan. He may preach obedience to God as the virtue of angels. But Milton's God does not seem to be above reproach. It is an arbitrary act of His to elevate His Son above the angels. God is portrayed as a feudal sovereign, and the angels are but his vassals —and they are again graded in rank. Milton himself fought against feudal monarchy, and defended and instigated the execution of Charles I. Satan has been fighting Milton's fight, and Milton consciously or unconsciously makes Satan a heroic figure. His preaching of obedience of the angels to God seems to carry little conviction. He himself might not be very serious about it. The reader's interest is certainly concentrated on Satan's heroic rebellion against God's autocracy. 'Paradise Lost I' seems to be a direct tribute to Satan's indomitable courage.

The following sentiments of Satan are Milton's own :

"What though the field be lost ?
All is not lost—the unconquerable will,
And study of revenge, immortal hate
And courage never to submit or yield ;
And what is else not to be overcome ?"

Some critics doubt whether Milton's purpose in 'Paradise Lost' is to be taken seriously. He sets out to justify the ways of God. But he makes it his task to vindicate Satan. We feel, as we go through 'Paradise Lost', that Satan stands nearer to the poet's heart than Adam. Satan stands for liberty—which Milton prized above everything else. The republican poet must have projected himself upon Satan. His Puritanism seems to be in conflict with his republicanism. His Puritanism sides with God's autocracy and would justify the ways of God. His republicanism draws him, heart and soul, to Satan. At the heart of 'Paradise Lost' lies this conflict—and it remains unsolved in Milton.

Q. 5. Paradise Lost is very revelation, however sublime, of Milton's intense egotism. Comment.

Or

Comment upon Coleridge's remark that Milton himself is in every line of Paradise Lost.

Or

Comment on the view that in Paradise Lost, Milton has externalised his own inner strife.

Or

Write a note on the autobiographical note in Milton's poetry with particular reference to Paradise Lost Book I.

Ans. The charm of Milton's poetry lies in the charm of Milton's character and personality. The beauty of Milton's poetry is that he reveals himself consciously or unconsciously in almost every line he wrote. His poetry is the expression of his thoughts on religion, theology, Puritanism, republicanism and liberty. Milton's poetry is, thus, the poet's emotional and spiritual autobiography.

With the exception of his two idylls, *L' Allegro* and *Il Penseroso*, in which no fact from the poet's life is traceable, almost all his works offer a glimpse of one aspect of his life or the other. In *Comus*, Milton, 'the Lady of Christ's' is in the leading role, for the chastity praised in the poem is poet's own. In *Samson Agonistes*, the plight of Samson is Milton's own plight. Besides being blind, both, Milton and Samson have an emotional identity. About the lines of *Lycidas* Legonis remarks, "It is not King (King Edward), but Milton who should be sought in them". All Milton's sonnets are autobiographical. Mark Pattison remarks : "The effectiveness of Milton's sonnets is chiefly due to the real nature of the character, person or incident of which each is the delineation. Each person, thing or fact, is a moment in Milton's life, one by which he was stirred : sometimes in the soul's depths, sometimes on the surface of feeling, but always truly moved".

But *Paradise Lost* reveals Milton's life in almost all its important phases. "There are throughout the poem passages that stand out above the rest, not because they particularly aid the story but because they form part of the spiritual autobiography of the poet". Milton's love of liberty and Republicanism find full expression in *Paradise Lost*. In the Civil War between the Parliament and King Charles I, Milton was a force to be reckoned with on the side of the Parliament. King Charles symbolized for him tyranny, autocracy, injustice and oppression. He was the enemy of human liberty, equality, fraternity and natural laws of justice. The Parliament stood as the advocate and defender of human rights and liberty. Therefore, Milton preached disaffection to the king and advocated and supported the cause of the rebels against the king. In Satan's revolt against God he perceived an individual's revolt against an all powerful autocrat and tyrant. Unwillingly he was driven to sympathize with Satan in his rebellion against God. Therefore, the portrait of Satan is enlivened by the poet's own personal feelings and sympathy. Like Satan, Milton himself had been a rebel—not indeed against God—but against the crowned kings of this earth. It is Milton's republicanism that speaks in the republicanism of Satan. In Satan's speeches, Milton's love of Liberty speaks. His imagination builds up this rebel champion of liberty into a stalwart hero ;

What though the field be lost ?
All is not lost : the unconquerable will,

And study of revenge, immortal hate,
And courage never to submit or yield ;

All the following sentiments expressed by Satan are Milton's own sentiments :

(1) Fallen Cherub, to be weak is miserable. Doing or suffering ;
(2) The Mind is its own place, and in itself, can make a Heaven of Hell, a Hell of Heaven ;
(3) Better to reign in Hell than serve in Heaven.
(4) Awake, arise, or be for ever fallen.

There are numerous autobiographical passages in *Paradise Lost*. A mention may be made of Milton's blindness 'what in me is dark/Illumine' is a direct reference to the poet's blindness. Praying to Heavenly Light. he writes the following touching lines :

Thee I revisit safe,
And fell thy sovran vital lamp ; but thou
Revisit'st not these eyes, that roll in vain,
To find thy piercing ray, and find no dawn ;
So thick a drop serene hath quenched their orb,
Or dim suffusion veiled.

Again, in the following lines the poet's blindness is referred to :

Thus with the year,
Seasons return ; but not to me returns,
Day, or the sweet approach of eve or morn
Or sight of vernal bloom, or summer's rose.

……………………………………………

So much the rather thou, Celestial Light
Irradiate ! there plant eyes ; all mist from thence,
Purge and dispense, that I may see and tell
Of things invisible to mortal sight.

Milton had fallen on evil days after Restoration. In the book III of *Paradise Lost*, Milton refers to this peril of life :

Though fallen on evil days
On evil days though fallen, and evil tongues
In darkness, and with dangers compass'd round
And solitude ; yet not alone, while thou
Visit'st my slumbers nightly, or when morn
Purples the east : still govern thou my song,
Urania, and fit audience find, though few.

Milton's abhorrence of a life of indulgence is seen in the following lines from Book I of *Paradise Lost* :

In Court and palaces he also reigns,
And in luxurious cities, where the noise,
Of riot ascends above their loftiest towers ;
And injury outrage ; and when night
Darkens the streets, then wander forth the sons
Of Belial, flown with insolence and wine.

Milton had a natural indignation against women. His feelings find expression in the following lines from Book I :

In Sion also not usung, where stood
Her Temple on the offensive Mountain, built
By that uxorious king, whose heart though large
Beguiled by fair idolatresses...........

But the most passionate outburst against womankind occurs in Book X :

Oh, why did God,
Creator wise, that peopled highest Heaven,
With spirits masculine, create at last
This novelty on Earth, this fair defect
Of Nature, not fill the World at once,
With men as Angels, without feminine,
Of find some other way to generate
Mankind ?

Thus, it is quite evident that we cannot separate Milton the poet from Milton the man. The impact of his colossal personality is clearly felt upon his works. In this connection, the views of Tillyard may be noted ; "you cannot ignore him any more than you can ignore Alexander the Great, or Cromwell, or Napoleon. He is too extraordinary a person to shut out from our notice ; and he is perhaps the only man of this type who has translated this mental urge into literature and not into action".

Note : Also see Introduction—'Milton's Self-Revelation in *Paradise Lost*', sub-heading 'Puritan Spirit'.

Q. 6. How far do you agree with the statement that "In spite of himself, he (Milton) was in deep sympathy with Satan, the great rebel of Heaven and the enemy of God' ?

Or

"The briefest survey of Milton's religious thought and feeling makes sufficiently absurd the romantic idea that he was of the devil's party without knowing it." Discuss the appropriateness of this observation.

Or

Blake, while speaking of *Paradise Lost*, said that "Milton was of the Devil's party without knowing it." Discuss this statement.

Ans. William Blake made his famous remark in his poem *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell* that "the reason Milton wrote in fetters when he wrote of Angels and at liberty when of Devils and Hell, is because he was a true poet and of the Devil's party without knowing it." Shelley, in his *A Defence of Poetry*, observed, "Milton's Devil as a moral being is (as) far superior to his God." Lascelles Abercrombie said. "It is surely the simple fact that if *Paradise Lost* exists for any one figure, that is Satan. It is in the figure of Satan that the imperishable significance of *Paradise Lost* is centered." Even E.M.W.

Tillyard, an opponent of Satanists, admits that "Milton did partly ally himself with Satan, that unwittingly he was led away by the creature of his own imagination......The character of Satan expresses as no other character or act or feature of the poem does, something in which Milton believed very strongly : heroic energy."

All such views about the glorification of Satan on the part of Milton are the outcome of some apparent facts about the character of Satan. At least in the first two books, Satan has been represented as a symbol of desire, energy and vital creative forces which enable man to live most fully. Satan's speeches are full of rousing and highly emotive words such as 'liberty', 'oppression' and 'freedom'. It was partly their emotional involvement with such themes which caused the Romantics like Blake and Shelley, to respond so enthusiastically to the character of Satan.

While writing the poem, Milton claimed that his aim was to justify the ways of God to men. But so many critics find that Milton has failed in achieving this aim. Grierson has gone to the extent of saying that instead of justifying the ways of God, Milton has justified Satan's ways to men. Such critics contend that from the beginning Milton fixes all the interest of the reader on Satan. Satan's heroic suffering, indomitable courage and unyielding purpose of carrying on resistance to the Will of God, excite our admiration and sympathy. The greatness of Satan lies in the fact that his purpose is steady and fearless and his determination to pursue the purpose is unshakable. In at least half the poem, Satan appears superior to God in many ways. In the other half, too he is a force to be reckoned with. Some critics feel to the extent that it is ultimately Satan, and not God, who triumphs : Man does fall and by him 'seduced'.

As against Satan, the image of God suggested is that of an autocrat—a glorified feudal monarch. It was against a feudal monarch that Milton fought. God has been presented as a whimsical manipulator, eager to maintain his superior position. In the opinion of Prof Waldock, "The movement of the thought (the Fall of Eve and then of Adam) is very interesting. There is a brilliant suggestion that the prohibition may be a trick of God's to test their courage, for if they risk death (whatever thing Death be) to achieve knowledge of Good and Evil, they will have earned their creator's praise indeed. If God punishes for this, he will not be just ; but if he is not just, how can he be God ? So momentarily God is argued away. But the next moment he is back again, this time as the God who may be testing them in an expected way, but in quite a different guise as a God jealous of them, bent on keeping them down."

Then again God, if he is kept in the background, does not seem to be a very impressive figure. His thunderbolt gives him advantage over Satan. By the weight of sheer physical force, he defeats Satan. The intellectual pre-eminence of Satan in his speeches in Hell is something rather notable. After all, Satan was able to draw a good portion of the angels after him by virtue of his skill and ability as a leader and his advocacy of freedom and equality—the latter must have appealed to the more intelligent angels. So it is a contest between God and Satan, not on a personal issue, but on the broad issue of the freedom of the angels. And in this God seems to compare unfavourably with Satan. The defeat and rout of Satan and his followers reveal that God rules by sheer brute force. This impression is at least conveyed to us at once by reading the first book of *Paradise Lost*.

But, in spite of all such criticism, Milton cannot be said to belong to the Devil's party. In fact, the virtues which have been alleged to glorify Satan should be taken only at their face value, which is perhaps the greatest proof possible that Milton was right in believing that the self-seeking, self-dramatizing energy which Satan embodies is misleading and dangerous to the majority of human beings. If we go a bit deeper into the intentions of the poet, we find that he does nowhere justify Satan's ways to men. Some critics feel that Milton realised that too much sympathy for Satan would destroy the poem's avowed purpose, to justify the ways of God; therefore he deliberately degraded the fallen Angel. Thus we find Satan soon degenerating. This change in Satan is repeatedly symbolized by his fading luster as he drops further and further away from his former glory in being one of God's chief servants.

The glorification of Satan was a dramatic necessity before Milton. Milton was writing a great theological epic exhibiting the combat between the greatest forces of Good and Evil through the combat between God and Satan. In order to make the victory of Good splendid it was necessary to make the force of Evil as grand as that of Good. "When the weight of the poetry is thrown in on Satan's side, the effect must be to equalize in our imagination the relative magnitude of the contending forces." (Dr. Rajan) Thus "the briefest survey of Milton's religious thought and feeling makes sufficiently absurd the romantic idea that he was of the Devil's party without knowing it."

Q. 7. "Milton seems to have lavished all the force of his imagination, and even of his sympathy, upon the arch-rebel, whose indomitable will beneath adversity, was in many respects akin to his own". Elucidate.

Ans. It is frequently said about Milton that he glorified Satan to an undue extent for the simple reason that he had an emotional affinity with the creature of his own imagination. Milton was a staunch advocate and supporter of human liberty and republicanism. In the civil war between the Parliament and the King of England, he was a force to be reckoned with on the side of the Parliament. King Charles I symbolized for him tyranny, autocracy, injustice and oppression. He was the enemy of human liberty, equality, fraternity and natural laws of justice. The parliament stood as the advocate and defender of human rights and liberty. Therefore, Milton preached disaffection to the king and advocated and supported the cause of the rebels against the king.

When Milton came to write about Satan's revolt against God, he naturally perceived in Satan's revolt an individual revolt against all powerful autocrat and tyrant. Unwittingly, therefore, he was driven to sympathize with Satan in his rebellion against God. Like Satan, Milton himself had been a rebel—not indeed against God—but against crowned kings on this earth. It is Milton's republicanism that speaks in the republicanism of Satan. In fact Satan becomes the spokesman of Milton. What Milton did in England, Satan did in Heaven. In other words, Satan becomes the champion of the cause of freedom and equality in Heaven, and even though hurled down from Heaven to Hell with his followers, he still cherishes the dream of liberty. In his speech, Milton's noblest sentiments are expressed :

What though the field be lost ?
All is not lost ; the unconquerable will,
And study of revenge, immortal hate,
And courage never to submit or yield,
And what is else not to be overcome ?

Satan is determined to wage eternal war against God. His intellect remains supreme. Suffering cannot blunt it. Rather, his puissant intellect and his indomitable will neutralize his suffering. He spurns the idea of yielding to suffering :

To be weak is miserable
Doing of suffering.

For him mind is a deciding factor. Place is immaterial :

The mind is its own place, and in itself
Can make a Heaven of Hell, a Hell of Heaven.

Milton himself was a great democrat and Republican. He was the champion of the poor, weak and fallen. He was a sworn enemy of tyranny in every form and shape. He was a great advocate of liberty. Mark Pattison rightly remarks that "he defended religious liberty against the prelates, civil liberty against the Crown, the liberty of the Press against the executive, liberty of conscience against the Presbyterians, and domestic liberty against the tyranny of Common Law". He had the first experience of tyranny, as a student at Cambridge, in the dictatorial bearing of the Anglican Archbishop Laud. The tyrannical bearing of Laud so disgusted him that he gave up the idea of entering the church for ever. "To the service of church", he wrote, "by the intention of parents and friends, I was destined of a child, and by my own resolution, till coming to some maturity of years and perceiving what tyranny had invaded the church that he who could take order must subscribe to be a slave, I thought it better to prefer a blameless silence before a life bought and begun with servitude and foreswearing". Later he discovered in Charles I a more potent dictator, tyrant and enemy of human liberty and honour. Therefore, he joined the Republicans and defended the regicides. When the Civil War started, Milton plunged himself into the flames of war. He wrote later : "Perceiving that the true way to liberty followed on from these beginnings, I resolved, though I was then meditating on certain other matters, to transfer into the struggle all my genius and all strength of my industry." He thus championed the cause of human liberty, equality and individual dignity to the best of his might and to the last breath of his life.

Therefore, we find that Milton projects much of himself upon Satan. The Renaissance spirit in Milton in its fading glow, lights up the mind of Satan. The revolt of the angels in heaven begins with Satan's challenge to the autocracy of God. Milton makes Satan a republican like himself. If it were not shocking impiety to some Christians, God might be put in the place of Charles and then Milton would be Satan.

Q. 8. Do you agree with the view that Free will is the theme of Paradise Lost ?

Ans. Milton wrote *Paradise Lost* with an express purpose of justifying the ways of God to men. But some critics have doubts about the success of the poet in achieving this aim. They find God as an unfeeling despot who unjustly punished Adam and Eve. For example, Waldock maintains that "The movement of the thought (the Fall of Eve and then of Adam) is very interesting. There is a brilliant suggestion that the prohibition may be a trick of God's to test their courage, for if they risk death (Whatever thing Death be) to achieve knowledge of Good and Evil, they will have earned their Creator's praise indeed. If God punishes for this, He will not be just ; but if he is not just, how can He be God ?" It is also argued that the Fall of Man cannot be justified on the ground that the figure of God that emerges is that of a Super Being who finds peculiar pleasure from the follies of his own creatures.

But this type of criticism only shows an inaccurate study of the poem. The poet has justified the ways of God by bringing in the doctrine of Free Will. In *Paradise Lost*, Book III, Milton discusses this doctrine. God being omnipotent and omniscient, knows the past, present and future of everything and every being that exists in Heaven, Earth or Hell or any of the innumerable planets and stars. He has the fore-knowledge of everything that happens anywhere in the limitless cosmos. Nothing can happen anywhere without the foreknowledge and permission of God. God had the foreknowledge of the angel's rebellion against His authority under the leadership of Satan. He also knew beforehand of Satan's success in seducing Adam and Eve of their commission of sin against God's explicit ordinance. He could certainly have prevented these things from happening, if he had only willed so. Therefore, the son of God asks God himself why he allowed these things to happen at all. In reply to this query, God explained the principle of Free Will.

God created human beings, and all Ethereal Powers 'just and right'. He also gave them conscience to judge and distinguish for themselves right from wrong, and good from evil. Good and Evil exist together in the universe. It is for man, under the dictates of his conscience, to shun evil and follow the path of good. Within these limits and under these conditions man is free to stand by God and act according to divine principles or go against them. Raphael also tells Adam in Book viii,

> "to stand or fall
> Free in thine own arbitrement lies".

Conscience, Will and Reason have been given to man to choose his own path of action. Therefore, man cannot blame any external power for his actions or for his sufferings in consequence of his own actions. If God had not made human beings and ethereal Powers free to act according to their conscience, how could he distinguish between the true and false, the constant and the inconstant ? So God says :

> "I made him just and right,
> Sufficient to have stood, though free to fall.
> Such I created all the Ethereal Powers.
> And Spirits, both them who stood and them who failed,
> Freely they stood, and fell who fell.
> Not free, what proof could they have given sincere
> Of true allegiance, constant faith, or love,
> Where only what they need must do appear,
> Not what they would ?"

In fact, Adam's fall was due to his submission to temptation without the use of his better judgment. He was quite free to reject the temptation. But he committed the sin of transgression in spite of Raphaël's advice in Book VIII :

> " . . . take heed lest passion sway
> Thy judgment to do aught, which else free will
> Would not admit ; thine and of all thy sons,
> The weal or woe in thee is placed ; beware !"

Thus, it is rightly said by critics like Greenlaw that the theme of *Paradise Lost* "is less that of obedience to God than of obedience to temperance, to the rational against the irrational part of human nature."

Again the action of Free Will is evidenced in Man's redemption. The Fall of Man is not final. The eating of the fruit of the tree of knowledge brings him the gift of Free Will. Man is to be given a chance. By a wise and judicious use of Free Will, and not by blind obedience, he can regain the favour of God. The Fall of Man, in fact, was a blessing in disguise. Gifted with Free Will man could render willing obedience to God. Adam and Eve lived at first in a happy garden—in a state of ideal bliss. Compulsory obedience was demanded of them. There was no knowledge and there could be, therefore, no sin. Ignorance was their bliss. They were less than man ; nor were they the mere angel (for angels have knowledge). For their act of disobedience "they lost Eden, but they gained a conscience".

Q. 9. 'Paradise Lost' is a mental pilgrimage : the loss of one paradise and the finding on this earth of a Paradise within the happier far"—(*Tillyard*). Discuss. [*Agra University*]

Ans. It is true that Milton strictly adheres to the Bible story in tracing the Fall of Man and its sequel. From the theological point of view, it is quite satisfactory, and orthodox Christians will have no fault to find with it. But if *Paradise Lost* is studied as an artistic work, we may discover in it a deeper meaning—a sort of symbolism—and it has a profound interest independently of, or rather dissociated from the fable and the epic machinery from which the symbolism evolves. The psychology of the story, which is far from obvious because of the epic treatment, needs to be properly grasped, and this will make *Paradise Lost* more interesting.

The Fall of Man was a necessity. The paradise that he lost because of tasting of the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge, was a person house. Ready and unquestioning obedience to God would have been offered. It might have satisfied God, but it would have kept man spiritually undeveloped. So long as knowledge was withheld from man, his obedience to God would have been a mere animal instinct and his life would have been little better than animal life. If man were not to remain in the semi-animal stage, he must have a free choice and judgment.

Satan did rather good than harm in seducing man. He rescued man from a life of blind instinct. Christ's sacrifice for man which is made so much of, would have had no meaning but for Satan's temptation of man. Satan himself rebelled against God on the freedom of man. If Satan came as tempter to man, he brought the gift of freedom. It should be obvious that the psychological development of human personality is illustrated here by means of a fable. Christ wrought redemption for the fallen man and that is the fable of Christian theologian. And man may rise again into heaven or enter into life eternal which is also a theologian's way of putting things.

Let us read it as human psychology and *Paradise Lost* will have a new meaning and interest. The whole process of the development of human personality lies at the core of the fable of 'Paradise Lost'. Satan's temptation of man should be read as the growing consciousness in man of his personality. Consciousness of personality brings with it free choice and judgment. By dying on the Cross, Christ might have brought redemption to man. Man lost one paradise (which is nothing but the state of ignorance and innocence) and gained a new one after he had been through the stage of free choice and independence, and this new paradise which means the acceptance or the sacrifice of Christ, can only be a spiritual rebirth, following upon the subjugation of the animal in Man. Milton speaks of "a paradise within thee, happier far." So, this new paradise is within ourselves and can mean only self-conquest.

The Fall of Man is not final. The eating of the fruit of the tree of knowledge brings the gift of free will. Man is to be given a chance. By a wise and judicious use of free will, and not by blind obedience, he can rise again into the favour of God. The Fall of Man was, in fact, a blessing in disguise. Gifted with free will man could render willing obedience to God. Adam and Eve lived at first in a happy garden—in a state of ideal bliss. Compulsory obedience was demanded of them. There was no knowledge and there could be, therefore, no sin. Ignorance was their bliss. They were less than man ; nor were they the more angel (for angels have knowledge). For their act of disobedience "they lost Eden, but they gained a conscience."

"The study of the later books of the poem shows that the Fall was in one sense an advance in their moral education. In their primitive state, we can hardly realize them to be ordinary human beings—they are half angels and half human. But after they have tasted the forbidden fruit, they seem to bring themselves down to our own level, we perceive that they are of the same flesh and blood as ourselves, and far more than in the days of their happiness our hearts go out to them in their misery."

Q. 10. Discuss—"The attitude of Milton's God to the rebel angels and to man is hard and unforgiving, below the standard of any decent morality, far below Christian charity of St. Paul." [*Agra University*]

Ans. Milton's God is the God of the Old Testament—stern, unforgiving. The Puritan conception of God is not unlike the Hebrew conception. Milton thinks of God as a "stern taskmaster." There is inconsistency in that Christ who sacrifices himself to save man, and represents another conception of God—a loving and forgiving God—should have been associated with the Hebraic God. There is a Hebraic strain in Milton—his zeal for righteousness—and it is in conflict with his Hellenism.

God hurls down Satan and his followers for their rebellion from heaven to hell and pursues them with thunder. Hell has been designed by God as a place of eternal torment for the fallen angel. The burning hell could have been conceived in a diabolical brain. The God if He could have to do anything with it is to degrade Himself worse than Satan, God's vindictiveness seems to be nondivine. The result is that Satan and his followers have a human interest as contrasted with the deliberate cruelty of God. This cruelty has been provocative in that Satan resolves to wage eternal war with God.

God appears in an equally unfavourable light when He expels Adam and Eve from Paradise for their act of disobedience. God rules heaven as an autocrat. He will be satisfied with nothing less than absolute obedience of His angels. Satan and his followers are expelled from heaven because they are not willing to obey Him without question. Then He creates man with the idea that the new generation might in future replace the rebel angels. His plan miscarries. Man breaks His command by eating the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge. Disobedience is his sin. He is guilty like Satan too. God cannot forgive him. It is an autocratic God. A wise and judicious God would not have grudged free choice and independence to man.

Christ's sacrifice which redeems man, is out of keeping with this conception of God. The scheme of *Paradise Lost* is thus vitiated by such contrariety of conception, nor does Milton's purpose of justifying the ways of God sound very cogent, for after all, the ways of Milton's God can admit of little justification. Milton lands himself no contraditon by associating the Hebrew God with the Christian God.

Q. 11. "An appreciation of Milton is the last reward of consummate scholarship." Discuss. [*Agra University*]

Ans. Milton was a great poet as well as a great scholar. His rich and profound classical scholarship is evident throughout his work. Then again whatever he wrote, he wrote with an intense seriousness of purpose. He submitted himself to sternest discipline, and jealously watched the development of his powers. He cultivated a style that adequately reflects his own personality with his classical instinct for balance and harmony. He was musically trained, and his ear for music never went wrong in making the collocation of sounds in his verse. His intensive study and preparation, his sound scholarship, his unerring verse of the melodic value of sounds, his supreme constructive power, his superb imagination, all go to the making of his verse.

His poetry, supreme in melody and power of imagination and marked by high seriousness and excellent constructive skill, may not produce its due effect upon the average reader. But to the trained student of English literature his poetry will reveal a world of perpetual delight and excitement. First, the melody of his verse will enchant such a reader. His poetry has to be read aloud if its stately music is to be appreciated. Milton's blank verse is a triumph of technique and through its agency he achieves the various modulations of musical effect. In this connection Hazlitt observes, "Milton's blank verse is the only blank verse in the language (except Shakespeare's) that deserves the name of verse." Landor said, "My ear is dissatisfied with everything for days together after the harmony of *Paradise Lost*......I recur to it incessantly as the noblest specimen in the world of eloquence, harmony and genius." Secondly, his imagination constructs a world without space and time-dizzying in its vastness and maintains due proportion between it and the actors in such a world. About this aspect, Matthew Arnold observes that Milton's imagination has enabled the Poet to create a style which includes "the perfection of expression in every direction and kind, the commonly called great and the commonly called small, the tragic and the comic, the serious and the ironic, and even to some extent the trivial (not in the worst sense, of course)." Thirdly, the images and associations that are brought together bearing witness to his extensive learning and scholarship will be of thrilling interest to a trained student of literature. Here he will find persons and things made familiar to him by his own study, but enriched and invested with new significance by Milton's poetry. He should meet the poet half-way, or he remains insensible to his poetry.

Macaulay writes, "There would seem, at first, to be no more ink in his words than in other words. But they are words of enchantment. No sooner are they pronounced than the past is present and the distant near. New forms of beauty start atonce into existence, and all the burial places of the memory give up their dead." Such an effect as is described by Macaulay is experienced by a scholar regarding Milton.

Q. 12. Tennyson calls Milton "God-gifted organ-voice of England."

Ans. See Introduction (*Milton as a Poet—His Melody of Diction*)."

Q. 13. Who is the real hero of Milton's *Paradise Lost* ?

Ans. See Introduction—The Hero of *Paradise Lost.*

Q. 14. In what ways *Paradise Lost* is similar to and different from the classical epic ?

Or

Discuss *Paradise Lost* as a typical epic.

Ans. See Introduction—Paradise Lost as an Epic.

Q. 15. Write a note on Milton's use of Similes in *Paradise Lost.*

Ans. See Introduction—Milton's Similes.

APPENDIX

SELECT CRITICISM

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1. ADDISON ON PARADISE LOST

Characters

"Milton's characters, most of them, lie out of nature, and were to be formed purely by his own inventions. It shows greater genius in Shakespeare to have drawn his Caliban, than his Hotspur or Julius Caesar ; the one was to be supplied out of his own imagination, where as the other might have been formed upon tradition, history and observation. It was much easier, therefore, for Homer to find proper sentiments for an assembly of Grecian generals than for Milton to diversify his infernal counsel with proper characters and inspire them with a variety of sentiments......Adam and Eve, before the fall, are a different species from that of mankind who descended from them, and none but a poet of the most unbounded inventions and the most exquisite judgment, could have filled their conversation and behaviour with so many circumstances during their state of innocence."

Sublimity of Thought

Nor is it sufficient for an epic poem to be filled with such thoughts as are natural unless it abounds also with such as are sublime.

Milton's chief talent, and, indeed, his distinguishing excellence lies in the sublimity of his thoughts. There are others of the moderns who rival him in every other part of poetry ; but in the greatness of his sentiments he triumphs over all the poets both, modern and ancient. Homer only excepted, the metaphors are very bold, but just. I must, however, observe that the metaphors are not too thick sown in Milton, which always savours too much of wit ; that they never clash with one another ; which, as Aristotle observes, turns a sentence into a kind of enigma or riddle, and that he seldom has recourse to them where the proper and natural words will do as well.

Milton, by the above mentioned helps, and by the choice of the noblest words and phrases which our tongues would afford him, has carried our language to a greater height than any of the English poets have ever done before or after him, and made sublimity of his style equal to that of his sentiments."

Hero of Paradise Lost

"There is another objection against Milton's fable, that the hero in 'Paradise Lost' is unsuccessful, and by no means a match for his enemies. This gave occasion to Mr. Dryden's reflections, that the devil was in reality Milton's hero. The 'Paradise Lost' is an epic or a narrative poem, and he that looks for an hero in it, searches for that which Milton never intended ; but if we will need fix the name of an hero upon any person in it, it is certainly the Messiah (Christ), who is the hero both in the principal action and in the chief episodes."

Element of Probability

"I must in the next place observe that Milton has inter-woven in the texture of his fable some particulars which do not seem to have probability enough for an epic poem, particularly in the actions which he ascribes to Sin and Death, and the pictures which he draws of the Limbo of Vanity, with other passages in the second book. Such allegories rather savour of the spirit of Spenser and Ariosto, than of Homer and Virgil."

Digressions

"In the structure of his poem, he has likewise admitted of too many digressions, though I must confess there is so great a beauty in these very digressions, that I would not wish them out of the poem."

Language

"If we consider the language of the great poet, we must allow that it is often too much laboured and sometimes obscured by old words, transpositions and foreign idioms. Milton's sentiments and ideas are so wonderfully sublime that it would have been impossible for him to have represented them in their full strength and beauty, without having recourse to these foreign assistances. Our language sank under him, and was unequal to that greatness of soul which furnished him with such glorious conceptions."

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2. DR. JOHNSON ON PARADISE LOST

Sublimity of Conception

"He seems to have been well acquainted with his own genius and to know what that Nature had bestowed upon him more bountifully than upon others ; the power of displaying the vast, illuminaing the splending, enforcing the awful, darkening the gloomy, and aggravating the dreadful ; he therefore chose a subject on which too much could not be said, on which he might tire his fancy without the censure of extravagance.

The appearance of the nature and the occurrences of life did not satiate his appetite of greatness. To paint things as they are required a minute attention, and employ the memory rather than fancy. Milton's delight was to sport in the wide region of possibility ; reality was a scene too narrow for his mind. He sent his faculties upon discovery, into worlds where only imagination can travel, and delighted to form new models of existence, and furnish sentiment and action to superior beings, to trace the counsels of hell, or accompany the choirs of heaven.

Sanctity of Thought

"In Milton every line breathes sanctity of thought and purity of manners, except when the train of narration requires the introduction of the rebellious spirits, and even they are compelled to acknowledge their subjection to God in such a manner as excites reverence and confirms piety."

3. COLERIDGE ON PARADISE LOST

Impact of the Age

"The age in which the foundations of Milton's mind were laid was congenial to it as one great era of profound erudition and individual genius—that in which the superstructure was carried up was no less favourable to it by the sternness of discipline and a show of self-control, highly flattering to the imaginative dignity of an heir of frame, and which won Milton over from the dear loved delights of academic groves and cathedral aisles to the anti-prelatic (Anti-Catholic) party. It acted on him, too, no doubt and modified his studies by a characteristic controversial spirit—a spirit no less busy indeed in political than in theological and ecclesiastical dispute, but carrying of the former almost always, more or less in the guise of the latter. And so far as Pope's censure of our poet—that he makes God the Father a school divine—is just, we must attribute it to the character of his age.

Such was the soil, which constituted, in the strict sense of the word, the circumstances of Milton's mind. In his mind itself there were purity and piety absolute ; an imagination to which neither the past nor the present were interesting except as far as they called forth and enlivened the great ideal, in which and for which he lived ; a keen love of truth, which after many weary pursuits, found a harbour in a sublime listening to the still voice in his own spirit, and as keen love of his country, which after a disappointment still more depressive, expanded and soard into a love of man as a probationer of immortality. These were, these alone could be, the conditions under which such a work as the *Paradise Lost* could be conceived and accomplished.

Character of Satan

"The character of Satan is pride and sensual indulgence, finding in self the sole motive of action. It is the character so often seen in little on the political stage. It exhibits all the restlessness, temerity and cunning which have marked the mighty hunters of mankind from Nimrod to Napoleon. The common fascination of man is that these great men, as they are called, must act from some great motive. Milton has carefully marked in his Satan the intense selfishness, the alcohol of egotism, which would rather reign in hell rather than serve in heaven. To place his lust of self in opposition to denial of self or duty, and to show what exertion it would make and what pains endure to accomplish its end, is Milton's particular object in the character of Satan. But around this character he has thrown a singularity of daring, a grandeur of sufferance, and a ruined splendeur, which constitute the very height of poetic sublimity."

Language

"The language and versification of **'Paradise Lost'** are peculiar in being so much more necessarily correspondent to each than those in any other poem or poet. The connection of the sentences and the position of the words are exquisitely artificial, but the position is rather according to the logic of grammar. Milton attempted to make the English language obey—the logic of passion as perfectly as the Greek and Latin. Hence the occasional harshness in the construction.

Sublimity

Sublimity is the pre-eminent characteristic of the 'Paradise Lost'. It is not an arithmetical sublime like Klopstock's, whose rule always is to tear what we might think large as contemptibly small. Rolpstock mistakes bigness for greatness. There is a greatness arising from images of effort and daring, and also from those of moral endurance, in Milton both are united. The fallen angels have human passions, invested with a dramatic reality.

"Milton is not a picturesque but a musical poet, although he has this merit. The object chosen by any particular foreground always remains prominent to the end, enriched, but not incumbered, by the opulence of descriptive details furnished by an exhaustless imagination. I wish, the 'Paradise Lost' were more carefully read and studied than I can see any ground for believing it is, especially those parts which form the habit of always looking for a story in poetry, are scarcaly read at all—as for example, Adam's vision of future events in 11th and 12th books. No one can rise from the perusal of this immortal poem without a deep sense of the grandeur and purity of Milton's soul, or without feeling how susceptible of domestic enjoyment he really was, notwithstanding the discomforts which actually resulted from an apparently unhappy choice in marriage. He was, as every truly great poet has ever been, a good man, but finding it impossible to realise his own aspirations, either in religion or politics, or society, he gave up his heart to the living spirit and light within him, and avenged himself on the world by enriching it with this record of his own transcendent ideal."

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4. HAZLITT ON PARADISE LOST

Descriptive Art

"Milton did not write from casual impulse, but after a severe examination of his own strength, and with a resolution to leave nothing undone which it was in his power to do. He always labours, and almost always succeeds. He strives hard to say the finest things in the world, and he does say them. He adorns and dignifies his subject to the utmost ; he surrounds it with every possible association of beauty or grandeur, whether moral, intellectual, or physical. He refines on his description of beauty ; loading sweets on sweets till the sense aches at them, and raises his images of terror to a gigantic elevation. In Milton there is always an appearance of effort, in Shakespeare, scarcely any.

Milton has borrowed more than any other writer and exhausted every source of imitation, sacred or profane, yet he is perfectly distinct from every other writer. The power of his mind is stamped on every line. The fervour of his imagination melts down and renders malleable, as in a furnace, the most contradictory materials. In reading his works, we feel ourselves under the influence of the mighty intellect, that the nearer it approaches to others, the more distinct it becomes from them. The quantity of art in him shows the strength of his genius, the weight of intellectual obligations would have oppressed any other writer. Milton's learning has the effect of institution. He describes objects of which he could only have read in books with the vividness of actual observation. His imagination has the force of nature. He makes words tell us pictures."

Human Interest in Paradise Lost

Of Adam and Eve it has been said, that the ordinary reader can feel little interest in them, because they have none of the passions, pursuits, or even relations of human life, except that of man and wife, the least interesting of all others, if not to the parties concerned, at least to the by-standers. The preference has on this account been given to Homer, who, it is said, has left very vivid and infinitely diversified pictures of all the passions and affections, public and private, incident to human nature—the relations of son, of brother, parent, friend, citizen and many others. Longinus preferred the *Iliad* to the *Odyssey*, on account of the greater number of battles it contains ; but I can neither agree to his criticism nor assent to the present objection.

5. MATTHEW ARNOLD ON PARADISE LOST

Art of Poetry and Grand Style

"If to our English race an adequate sense of perfection of work is a real danger, if the discipline of respect for a high and flawless excellence is peculiarly needed by us, Milton is, of all our gifted men, the best lesson, the most salutary influence. In the sure and flawless perfection of his rhythm and diction, he is as admirable as Virgil or Dante, and in this respect he is unique amongst us. No one else in English literature and art possesses the like distinction.

Milton, of all our English race, is by his diction and rhythm the one artist of the highest rank in the great style whom we have, this I take as requirirng no discussion, this I take as certain.

The mighty power of poetry and art is generally admitted. But where the soul of this power, of this power at its least chiefly resides, very many of us fail to see. It resides chiefly in the refining and elevation wrought in us by the high and rare excellence of the great style. We may feel the effect without being able to give ourselves clear account of its cause, but the thing is so. Now, no race needs the influence mentioned, the influence of refining and elevation, more than ours; and in poetry and art our grand source of them is Milton.

To what does he owe this supreme distinction? To nature first and foremost, to that bent of nature of inequality which to the worshippers of the average man is so unacceptable; to a gift, a divine favour. "The older one grows," says Goethe, "the more one prizes natural gifts, because by no possibility can they be procured and struck on. Nature formed Milton to be a great poet. But what other poet has shown so sincere a sense of the grandeur of his vocation, and a moral effort so constant and sublime to make and keep himself worthy of it?

The Milton of religious and political controversy and perhaps of domestic life also, is not seldom disfigured by want of amenity, by acerbity. The Milton of poetry, on the other hand, is one of those great men 'who are modest'—to quote a fine remark of Leopardi—'who are modest, because they continually compare themselves, not with other men, but with that idea of the perfect which they have before their mind.' The Milton of poetry is the man, in his own magnificent phrase, of devout prayer to that Eternal Spirit that can enrich all utterance and knowledge, and sends out his Seraphim with the hollowed fire of his altar, to touch and purify the lips of whom he pleases.' And finally, the Milton of poetry is, in his own words again, a man of 'industrious and select reading.' Continually be liked in companionship with high and rare excellence, with the great Hebrew poets and prophets, with the great poets of Greece and Rome. The Hebrew compositions were not in verse, and can be inadequately represented by the grand, measured prose of our English Bible. The verse of the poets of Greece and Rome no translation can adequately reproduce. Prose cannot have the power of verse; verse translation may give whatever of charm is in the soul and talent of the translator himself, but never the specific charm of the verse and poet translated. In our race are thousands of readers, presently there will be millions, who know not a word of Greek and Latin, and will never learn those languages. If this host of readers are ever to gain any sense of power and charm of the great poets of antiquity, their way to gain it is not through translations of the ancients, but through the original poetry of Milton, who has the like power and charm, because he has the like great style.

Through Milton they may gain it, for, in conclusion, Milton is English ; this master in the great style of the ancients is English—Milton has made the great style no longer an exotic hero, he has made it an inmate amongst us, a heaven, and a power.

6. T. S. ELIOT ON PARADISE LOST

Milton's greatness

"While it must be admitted that Milton is a very great poet indeed, it is something of a puzzle to decide in what greatness consists. On analysis, the marks against him appear both more numerous and more significant than the marks to his credit. As a man, he is antipathetic. Either from the moralist's point of view, or from the theologian's point of view or from the psychologist's point of view, or from that of the philosopher, or judging by the ordinary standards of likeable in human beings, Milton is unsatisfactory. The doubts which I have to express about him are more serious than these. His greatness as a poet has been sufficiently celebrated, though I think largely for the wrong reasons, and without the proper reservations. What seems to me necessary is to assert at the same time his greatness—in what he could do well he did better than any one else has ever done it—and the serious charges to be made against him in respect of the deterioration, the peculiar type of deterioration to which he subjected the language.

The most important fact about Milton for any purposes is his blindness. I do not mean that to go blind in middle life is itself enough to determine the whole nature of a man's poetry. Blindness, must be considered in conjunction with Milton's personality and character, and the peculiar education which he received. I must also be considered in connection with his devotion to and expertness in the art of music. Had Milton been a man of very keen sense—I mean of all the five senses,—his blindness would not have mattered so much. But for a man whose consciousness, such as it was, had been withered early by book-learning and whose gifts were natural, it mattered a great deal. I would seem, indeed, to have helped to concentrate on what he could do best.

At no period is the visual imagination conspicuous in Milton's poetry. It would be as well to give a few illustrations of which I mean by visual imagination. From *Macbeth* :

This guest of summer,
The temple-haunting martlet, does approve
By this loved mansionry that the heaven's breath
Smell wooingly here ; no jutly frieze,
Buttress, not going of vantage, but this bird
Hath made his pendant bed and procreant cradle :
Where he most breed and haunt, I have observed
The air is delicate.

It may be observed that such an image, as well as another familiar quotation from a little later in the same play

Light thickens, and crow
Makes wing to the rocky wood.

not only offer something to the eye, but, so to speak, to the common sense. I mean that they convey the feeling of being in "particular place at a particular time." The comparison with Shakespeare offers another indication of the peculiarity of Milton. With Shakespeare, far more than with any other poet in English, the combinations of words offer perpetual novelty ; they enlarge the meaning of the individual words indeed : thus 'procreant cradles', 'rooky woods.' In comparison, Milton's images do not give this sense of particularity, nor are the separate words developed in significance. His language is if one may use the term without disparagement, *artificial* and *conventional*......

"A disadvantage of the rhetorical style appears to be that a dislocation takes place, through the hepertrophy of the auditory imagination at the expense of the visual and tactile, so that the inner meaning is separated from the surface, and tends to become something occult, or at least without effect upon the reader until fully understood. To extract everything possible from *Paradise Lost*, it would seem necessary to read in two different ways, first solely for the sound, and second for the sense. The full beauty of his long periods can hardly be enjoyed while we are wresting with the meaning as well ; and for the pleasure of the ear the meaning is hardly necessary except in so far as certain key-words indicate the emotional tone of the passage. Now Shakespeare, or Dante, will bear innumerable readings, but at each reading all the elements of appreciation can be present. There is no interruption between the surface that these poets present to you and the core. There seems to be a divison in Milton between the philosopher and the poet.

7. HUTCHINSON ON MILTON

The Essentially English Poet

"The ideas which Milton expressed were, most of them, especially representative of the English mind. Above all, there is his lifelong concern for freedom in every department of life, personal and national, intellectual and religious. Again, his habit of viewing every question, political and religious, in its moral aspect is characteristically English, as foreigners have always observed, not always without suspicion.

Milton is also very English in his sturdy individualism. He claimed and exercised the right to think for himself, to form his own political judgements and to interpret the scriptures in his own way with singularly little regard for tradition and authority. He was not free from the defects of such unqualified individualism. While he could generally find those who were able to agree with his political sentiments, and associated himself to any religious communion in spite of religion being his dominant concern, at all costs he must preserve his intellectual integrity, and he uttered his convictions on matters of Church and state with small concern for his personal safety and reputation.

As Oliver Cromwell is the greatest representative of Puritanism in the field of action, Milton is in the sphere of thought. Most fair-minded Englishmen will allow that the Puritan strain in English history has done more to ennoble and strengthen our national life than to debase and weaken it. Milton's whole-hearted support of the Puritan cause necessarily qualifies the esteem of Englishmen who do not share his political and religious convictions, but we should have thought the worse of him if, when grave national issues were to be decided, he had proudly stood aloof and cried with Mercutio, 'A plague o' both our Houses. Yet inevitably his vehement partisanship makes his appeal less universal than that of Shakespeare, who had a larger share of the touch of nature which makes the whole world kin.

When he had already won European fame by his Latin *Defence of the English People* and might have increased that fame by continuing to use that language, he rightly decided to do all possible honour to the mother tongue by employing it for his highest task. "What other author", asks Dr. Johnson, "ever soared so high, or sustained his flight so long ?" There are, indeed, some critics in our time who complain that there is monotony diction which is too far removed from the language of common speech. It is, however, his own individual style, which he believed to be best suited to his majestic theme The common judgment of the last two centuries is not likely to be reversed by the passing mood of criticism.

Most lovers of our English literature will agree with the poet Gray in placing Milton next after Shakespeare :

> Nor second He, that rode sublime
> Upon the seraph wings of Ecstasy
> The secrets of H' Abyss to spy,
> He passed the flaming bounds of Place and Time ;
> The living throne, the sapphire-blaze,
> He saw, but blasted with excess of light
> Closed his eyes in endless night.

"Such sublimity as Milton in *Paradise Lost* could have proceeded only from a mind and character that had something of true nobility. The courage and tenacity of purpose with which he undertook his great work in spite of blindness and adversity will always command the admiration of Englishmen. "He was born", says Johnson, "for whatever is arduous ; there is an heroic quality in the temper and proud independence of the blind poet. He could turn even his affliction to advantage as he himself claims in the fine autobiographical passage at the beginning of the Third Book of the epic and other have gladly recognised. Oordsworth had not only Homer and Tiresias in mind, but also his own countrymen when he wrote of man's imperishable spirit :

> Unto the men who see not as we see
> Futurity was thought in ancient times,
> To be laid open, and they prophesied,
> And know we not that from the blind have flamed
> The highest, holiest, raptures of the lyre ;
> And wisdom married to immortal verse,

THE MILTON CHRONOLOGY

(A) Personal Events

1608	Milton born in London, December 9.
1620	At St. Paul's School—friendship with Diodati.
1625	At Cambridge—Christ's College.
1626	Quarrel with College tutor and probable rustication for some time.
1632	M. A. at Cambridge. Retires to Horton in Buckinghamshire.
1638	Milton's mother dies.
1638–39	Continental travels. Meets Grotius at Paris and Galileo at Florence.
1639	Returns from travel and takes up residence near St. Bride's Churchyard. Receives his two nephews as pupils. Removes to Aldergate Street.
1641	Begins his pamphleteering career in the Presbyterian interest.
1643	Marries Mary Powell. She returns to her parents and refuses to return. Writes first tract on Divorce.
1645	Mary Powell returns. Shifts from Aldergate to Barbican.
1646	Breaks with the Presbyterians. Milton's father dies.
1647	Gives up pupils and changes to a house near Lincoln's Inn Fields.
1649	Milton as Secretary for "Foreign Tongues" to the Council of State. Moves to Whitehall. Eyesight begins to fail.
1651	Changes residence to a "garden-house" in Petty France, Westminster, overlooking St. James Park. Here he lives down to the Restoration.
1652	Total eclipse of eyesight.
1653	Death of Mary Powell, leaving three daughters behind.
1656	Milton's second marriage with Catharine Woodcock.
1658	Death of Milton's second wife. *Paradise Lost* begun.
1660	Last potitical pamphlet—***Ready and Easy Way to Establish a Commonwealth.*** **The Restoration.**

Milton in hiding and then in custody. Escapes with a fine, two of his Tracts being burnt by the common hangman. Loss of property. Lodges in Holborn and thence in Jewin Street.

1663 Marries Elizabeth Minshull. Changes to a house opposite Artillery Ground, Bunhill Row. Here he resides till death.

1665 The Plague Year. Milton at Chalfont in Buckinghamshire, hired for him by Ellwood. The MS. of *Paradise Lost* seen by Ellwood. *Paradise Regained* begun.

1666 Milton's house in Breadstreet (where he was born) burnt down in the Great Fire of London.

1667 Publication of *Paradise Lost.*

1671 *Paradise Regained* and *Samson Agonistes.*

1674 Dies, November 10.

(B) Publications etc.

1626 Latin Elegies, at Cambridge.
On the Death of a Fair Infant.

1629 *Ode on the Nativity of Christ.*

1630 *Lines on Shakespeare, A Solemn Music*

1633 *Arcades, L' Allegro* and *Il Penseroso.*

1634 *Comus.*

1637 *Lycidas.*

1638–39 Italian Sonnets. *Epitaphium Damonis.*

1641 "The Pamphlet Year"—Presbyterian pamphlets.
(1) Of Reformation in England, (2) Prelatical Episcopacy, (3) Reason of Church Government, (4) Animadversions.

1642 Apology for Smectymnuus. (This was the last of the five Presbyterian or Anti-Episcopalian tracts. The Sonnet : *When an Assault was Intended to the City.*

1643 The Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce (First Divorce Tract), a few months after his marriage.

1644 (This is another eventful year in Milton's pamphleteering career.)
Feb. : Second Edition of the First Divorce Tract.
June : Tractate on Education.
July : The Second Divorce Tract.
Nov : *The Areopagitica.*

1645 Two more Divorce Tracts, *viz., Tetrachordon,* and *Colasterion.* Two sonnets against "Detractors."

1646 First collected edition of Milton's early poems.

The Sonnet on "Forcers of Conscience" (against the Presbyterians).

1649 "Tenure of Kings and Magistrates." *Eikonoklastes.*

1651 *First Defence of the English People*—in Latin.

1654 *Second Defence of the English People*—in Latin.

1655 Sonnet : *On the Late Massacre in Piedmont.*

1658 Sonnet in honour of his second wife after her death : "Methought I saw etc."
Paradise Lost begun.

1659 Way to remove Hirelings.

1660 Ready and Easy Way to establish a Commonwealth. Two of his tracts burnt by the common hangman, *viz.*, *Eikonoklastes* and *The First Defence.*

1665 *Paradise Lost* completed. *Paradise Regained* begun.

1667 *Paradise Lost* published.

1669 "History of England."

1671 *Paradise Regained* and *Samson Agonistes* published together.

1673 "On True Religion, Heresy, and Schism." New edition of Milton's Early Poems, Christian Doctrine (Latin) left in an incomplete copy at his death.

1674 Second edition of *Paradise Lost* dividing the Epic into twelve books from the original ten.

(C) Public Events

1613 The Princess Elizabeth married to the Elector of the Palatinate, which leads England for a time, but a few years later, into the Thirty Years' War.

1616 Death of Shakespeare, also of Beaumont.

1618 Execution of Raleigh. Thirty Years' War begun.

1620 Bacon's *Novum Organum.*

1621 Fall of Bacon.

1625 Death of King James I and Accession of Charles I.

1626 Death of Bacon.

1628 Petition of Right.

1629 Quarrel between King and Parliament. Parliament dissolved till 1640. The King rules without Parliament.

1633 Strafford becomes chief minister to the King, and Laud, Archbishop of Canterbury.

1634 First Levy of Ship-money Tax.

1637 Hampden refuses to pay Ship-money tax. Revolt in Scotland on account of Laud's Church Policy.

1640	The Short Parliament called and dissolved.
	The Long Parliament meets, November 3, 1640.
1641	King Charles marches upon Scotland.
	The Grand Remonstrance.
	Parliament impeaches twelve Bishops including Archbishop Laud.
1642	Civil War started.
	Battle of Edgehill.
1643	Solemn League Covenant formed by the Presbyterians to continue the Civil War.
1644	Battle of Marston Moor.
1645	The 'New Model' Army of Parliament formed. Rise of Cromwell.
	Battle of Naseby ending in the King's complete defeat. Execution of Laud.
1646	King Charles surrenders to the Scots.
1647	The Scots surrender the King to the English Parliament. Flight of Charles to the Isle of Weight.
1648	"Pride's Purge"—Presbyterian members of Parliament against the King's execution expelled by Cromwell. Treaty of Westphalia puts an end to the Thirty Years' War on the continent.
1649	Execution of King Charles I in front of Whitehall Place.
1650	Cromwell marches upon Scotland against the Scottish Presbyterians and defeats them in the battle of Dunbar.
1651	Scottish and Irish Rebellion put down. Battle of Worcester. Hobbes' *Leviathan* published.
1653	Blake's naval victory.
	The Long Parliament dissolved by Cromwell. "Barebone's Parliament" votes Cromwell to be Lord Protector of England.
1654	Cromwell's first Parliament.
1655	Cromwell dissolves Parliament, embarks on a bold foreign policy. Alliance with France. Blake's victories in the Mediterranean. British conquest of Jamaica.
1656	Cromwell's second Parliament.
1657	Cromwell refuses kingship and is re-appointed Lord Protector of England.
1658	Cromwell's second Parliament dissolved. Cromwell dies, September 3. His son Richard elected Lord Protector.
1659	The Long Parliament recalled and expelled.
1660	General Monk enters London. The "Rump" of the

	Long Parliament dissolves itself. Charles II's Declaration of Breda, promising amnesty to the rebels. Charles lands in England as King in May, 1660.
1662	The King marries Catherine of Braganza, who brings to England Tangier and the Island of Bombay as her dowry. Dunkirk sold to Louis XIV of France.
1662–65	Legislation against the Dissenters.
1664	War with Holland.
1665	Plague in London.
1666	Fire of London.
1667	The Dutch march up the Medway and threaten London. They are defeated by James, Duke of York, the King's brother.
1668	England in Triple Alliance with Holland and Sweden against France.
1670	Secret Treaty of Dover. The King in alliance with Louis XIV.
1672	War recommended against Holland. Charles issues Declaration of Indulgence to Catholics in England.
1673	Charles withdraws Declaration.
1674	Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle. End of the War with Holland. The Test Act.

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Educational Publishers,
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